

THE
BRITISH POETS.

V O L. XI.

EDINBURGH.

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.

BRITISH POTTS



F A B L E S,
ANCIENT AND MODERN;

TRANSLATED INTO

V E R S E,

FROM

HOMER, OVID, BOCCACE,
AND CHAUCER:

WITH

ORIGINAL POEMS.

By JOHN DRYDEN, Esq;

VOLUME III.

Nunc ultro ad cineres ipsius et ossa parentis
(Haud equidem sine mente, reor, sine numine divum)
Adsumus. VIRG. Æn. lib. 5.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.

T A B L E S

ANCIENT AND MODERN

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Printed at the University of Oxford, by J. Sturt, Printer to the University.
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A. M. D. C. C. LXXIII.

EDINBURGH.

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CLARKE,
and J. BALFOUR.

M. DCC. LXXIII.

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WESTMONT

TO HIS
GRACE
THE
DUKE of ORMOND.

MY LORD,

SOME estates are held in England, by paying a fine at the change of every Lord. I have enjoy'd the patronage of your family, from the time of your excellent grandfather to this present day. I have dedicated the lives of Plutarch to the first Duke; and have celebrated the memory of your heroic father. Tho' I am very short of the age of Nestor, yet I have liv'd to a third generation of your house; and by your Grace's favour am admitted still to hold from you by the same tenure.

I am not vain enough to boast that I have deserv'd the value of so illustrious a line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three descents they have been pleas'd to distinguish my poems from those of other men; and have accordingly made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to say, that as your grandfather and father were cherish'd and adorn'd with honours by two successive Monarchs, so I have been esteem'd, and patronis'd, by the grandfather, the father, and the son, descended from one of the most ancient, most conspicuous, and most deserving families in Europe.

'Tis true, that by delaying the payment of my last fine, when it was due by your Grace's accession to the titles and patrimonies of your house, I may seem, in

rigour of law, to have made a forfeiture of my claim; yet my heart has always been devoted to your service: And since you have been graciously pleased, by your permission of this address, to accept the tender of my duty, 'tis not yet too late to lay these poems at your feet.

The world is sensible that you worthily succeed, not only to the honours of your ancestors, but also to their virtues. The long chain of magnanimity, courage, easiness of access, and desire of doing good, even to the prejudice of your fortune, is so far from being broken in your Grace, that the precious metal yet runs pure to the newest link of it; which I will not call the last, because I hope and pray, it may descend to late posterity: And your flourishing youth, and that of your excellent Duchesses, are happy omens of my wish.

'Tis observ'd by Livy and by others, that some of the noblest Roman families retained a resemblance of their ancestry, not only in their shapes and features, but also in their manners, their qualities, and the distinguishing characters of their minds; Some lines were noted for a stern, rigid virtue, savage, haughty, parsimonious, and unpopular: Others were more sweet and affable; made of a more pliant paste, humble, courteous, and obliging; studious of doing charitable offices, and diffusive of the goods which they enjoyed. The last of these is the proper and indelible character of your Grace's family. God Almighty has endued you with a softness, a beneficence, an attractive behaviour, winning on the hearts of others; and so sensible of their misery, that the wounds of fortune seem not insisted on them, but on yourself. You are so ready to redress, that you almost prevent their wishes, and

DEDICATION.

always exceed their expectations: As if what was yours, was not your own, and not given you to possess, but to bestow on wanting merit. But this is a topic which I must cast in shades, lest I offend your modesty, which is so far from being ostentatious of the good you do, that it blushes even to have it known: And therefore, I must leave you to the satisfaction and testimony of your own conscience, which, though it be a silent panegyric, is yet the best.

You are so easy of access, that Poplicola was not more, whose doors were opened on the outside, to save the people even the common civility of asking entrance; where all were equally admitted; where nothing that was reasonable was denied; where misfortune was a powerful recommendation, and where (I can scarce forbear saying) that want itself was a powerful mediator, and was next to merit.

The history of Peru assures us, that their Inca's, above all their titles, esteemed that the highest, which called them Lovers of the poor: A name more glorious than the Felix, Pius, and Augustus of the Roman Emperors; which were epithets of flattery, deserved by few of them, and not running in a blood like the perpetual gentleness, and inherent goodness of the Ormond family.

Gold, as it is the purest, so it is the softest, and most ductile of all metals: Iron, which is the hardest, gathers rust, corrodes itself; and is therefore subject to corruption: It was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inscriptions of the great. Indeed, 'tis fit for armour, to bear off insults, and preserve the wearer in the day of battle: But the danger

once repelled, 'tis laid aside by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil conversation ; a necessary guard in war, but too harsh and cumbersome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more human life.

For this reason, my Lord, though you have courage in a heroical degree, yet I ascribe it to you but as your second attribute : Mercy, beneficence, and compassion, claim precedence, as they are first in the Divine Nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at best but a holiday kind of virtue, to be seldom exercised, and never but in cases of necessity ; affability, mildness, tenderness, and a word, which I would fain bring back to its original signification of virtue, I mean good nature, are of daily use : They are the bread of mankind, and staff of life : Neither sighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curses of the vanquished, follow acts of compassion, and of charity : But a sincere pleasure, and serenity of mind, in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot suffer the misfortunes of another, without redress ; lest they should bring a kind of contagion along with them, and pollute the happiness which he enjoys.

Yet, since the perverse temper of mankind, since oppression on one side, and ambition on the other, are sometimes the unavoidable occasions of war ; that courage, that magnanimity, and resolution, which is born with you, cannot be too much commended : And here it grieves me that I am scantied in the pleasure of dwelling on many of your actions : But *αἰδέομαι Τρωας* is an expression which Tully often uses, when he would do what he dares not, and fears the censure of the Romans.

I have sometimes been forced to amplify on others; but here, where the subject is so fruitful, that the harvest overcomes the reaper, I am shortened by my chain, and can only see what is forbidden me to reach: Since it is not permitted me to commend you, according to the extent of my wishes, and much less is it in my power to make my commendations equal to your merits.

Yet, in this frugality of your praises, there are some things which I cannot omit, without detracting from your character. You have so formed your own education, as enables you to pay the debt you owe your country; or, more properly speaking, both your countries: because you were born, I may almost say in purple, at the castle of Dublin, when your grandfather was Lord-Lieutenant, and have since been bred in the court of England.

If this address had been in verse, I might have called you, as Claudian calls Mercury, *Numen commune, gemino faciens commercia mundo*. The better to satisfy this double obligation, you have early cultivated the genius you have to arms, that, when the service of Britain or Ireland shall require your courage, and your conduct, you may exert them both to the benefit of either country. You began in the cabinet what you afterwards practised in the camp; and thus both Lucullus and Caesar (to omit a crowd of shining Romans) formed themselves to the war by the study of history; and, by the examples of the greatest captains, both of Greece and Italy, before their time. I name those two commanders in particular, because they were better read in chronicle than any of the Roman leaders; and

that Lucullus in particular, having only the theory of war from books, was thought fit, without practice, to be sent into the field against the most formidable enemy of Rome. Tully indeed was called the learned consul in derision; but then he was not born a soldier: His head was turned another way: When he read the tactics, he was thinking on the bar, which was his field of battle. The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a general who dares not make use of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and of resolution; in him it will direct his martial spirit; and teach him the way to the best victories, which are those that are least bloody, and which, though achieved by the hand, are managed by the head. Science distinguishes a man of honour from one of those athletic brutes, whom undeservedly we call heroes. Cursed be the poet, who first honoured with that name a mere Ajax, a man-killing idiot. The Ulysses of Ovid upbraids his ignorance, that he understood not the shield for which he pleaded: There was engraven on it, plans of cities, and maps of countries, which Ajax could not comprehend, but looked on them as stupidly as his fellow-beast the lion. But, on the other side, your Grace has given yourself the education of his rival, you have studied every spot of ground in Flanders, which, for these ten years past, has been the scene of battles and sieges. No wonder if you performed your part with such applause, on a theatre which you understood so well.

If I designed this for a poetical encomium, it were easy to enlarge on so copious a subject; but, confining myself to the severity of truth, and to what is becoming me to say, I must not only pass over many instances

of your military skill, but also those of your assiduous diligence in the war ; and of your personal bravery, attended with an ardent thirst of honour ; a long train of generosity ; profuseness of doing good ; a soul unsatisfied with all it has done ; and an unextinguished desire of doing more. But all this is matter for your own historians ; I am, as Virgil says, *spatiis exclusus iniquis*.

Yet, not to be wholly silent of all your charities, I must stay a little on one action, which preferred the relief others to the consideration of yourself. When, in the battle of Landen, your heat of courage (a fault only pardonable to your youth) had transported you so far before your friends, that they were unable to follow, much less to succour you ; when you were not only dangerously, but in all appearance mortally wounded ; when, in that desperate condition, you were made prisoner, and carried to Namur, at that time in possession of the French ; then it was, my Lord, that you took a considerable part of what was remitted to you of your own revenues, and, as a memorable instance of your heroic charity, put it into the hands of Count Guiscard, who was governor of the place, to be distributed among your fellow-prisoners. The French commander, charmed with the greatness of your soul, accordingly consign'd it to the use for which it was intended by the donor : By which means the lives of so many miserable men were saved, and a comfortable provision made for their subsistence, who had otherwise perished, had not you been the companion of their misfortune ; or rather sent by Providence, like another Joseph, to keep out famine from invading those

whom in humility you called your brethren. How happy was it for those poor creatures, that your Grace was made their fellow-sufferer? And how glorious for you, that you chose to want, rather than not relieve the wants of others? The heathen poet, in commending the charity of Dido to the Trojans, spoke like a Christian: *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.* All men, even those of a different interest, and contrary principles, must praise this action, as the most eminent for piety, not only in this degenerate age, but almost in any of the former; when men were made *de meliore luto*; when examples of charity were frequent, and when there were in being *Teucris pulcherrima proles, magnanimi heroes, nati melioribus annis.* No envy can detract from this; it will shine in history; and like swans, grow whiter the longer it endures: And the name of ORMOND will be more celebrated in his captivity, than in his greatest triumphs.

But all actions of your Grace are of a piece; as waters keep the tenor of their fountains; your compassion is general, and has the same effect as well on enemies as friends. 'Tis so much in your nature to do good, that your life is but one continued act of placing benefits on many; as the sun is always carrying his light to some part or other of the world: And were it not that your reason guides where to give, I might almost say, that you could not help bestowing more than is consisting with the fortune of a private man, or with the will of any but an Alexander.

What wonder is it then, that being born for a blessing to mankind, your supposed death in that engagement was so generally lamented through the nation?

The concernment for it was as universal as the loss; and though the gratitude might be counterfeit in some, yet the tears of all were real; where every man deplored his private part in that calamity; and even those who had not tasted of your favours, yet built so much on the fame of your beneficence, that they bemoaned the loss of their expectations.

This brought the untimely death of your great father into fresh remembrance; as if the same decree had passed on two short successive generations of the virtuous; and I repeated to myself the same verses, which I had formerly applied to him: *Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra esse sinunt*. But, to the joy not only of all good men, but of mankind in general, the unhappy omen took not place. You are still living to enjoy the blessings and applause of all the good you have perform'd, the prayers of multitudes whom you have obliged, for your long prosperity; and that your power of doing generous and charitable actions may be as extended as your will; which is by none more zealously desir'd than by

Your GRACE's most humble,

most obliged, and most

Obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

DECLARATION

The undersigned, being a citizen of the United States, do hereby declare that I am a native-born citizen of the United States, and that I am entitled to the rights and privileges of such citizen.

I do hereby declare that I am a native-born citizen of the United States, and that I am entitled to the rights and privileges of such citizen.

I do hereby declare that I am a native-born citizen of the United States, and that I am entitled to the rights and privileges of such citizen.

I do hereby declare that I am a native-born citizen of the United States, and that I am entitled to the rights and privileges of such citizen.

P R E F A C E.

TIS with a Poet, as with a man who designs to build, and is very exact, as he supposes, in casting up the cost beforehand: But, generally speaking, he is mistaken in his account, and reckons short of the pence he first intended. He alters his mind as the work proceeds, and will have this or that convenience more, of which he had not thought when he began. It has it happened to me: I have built a house, where I intended but a lodge; yet with better success than a certain nobleman, who, beginning with a dog-kennil, never lived to finish the palace he had contrived.

From translating the first of Homer's Iliads, (which I intended as an essay to the whole work) I proceeded to the translation of the twelfth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses, because it contains, among other things, the causes, the beginning, and ending, of the Trojan war: Here I ought in reason to have stopped; but the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses lying next in my way, I could not balk 'em. When I had compassed them, I was so taken with the former part of the fifteenth book, which is the master-piece of the whole Metamorphoses, that I enjoined myself the pleasing task of rendering it into English. And now I found, by the number of verses, that they began to swell into a little volume; which gave me an occasion of looking backward on the beauties of my author, in his former books.

There occurred to me the hunting of the boar, Cinyras and Myrrha, the good-natured story of Baucis and Philemon, with the rest, which I have translated closely enough, and given them the same turn of verse which they had in the original; and this, I may say without vanity, is not the talent of every Poet: He who has arrived the nearest to it, is the ingenious and learned Sandys, the best versifier of the former age; I may properly call it by that name, which was the former part of this concluding century. For Spenser and Fairfax both flourish'd in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; great masters in our language, and who ran much farther into the beauties of our numbers, than those who immediately followed them. Milton was the poetical son of Spenser, and Mr Waller of Fairfax; for we have our lineal descents and clans, as well as other families: Spenser more than once insinuates that the soul of Chaucer was transfused into his body, and that he was begotten by him two hundred years after his decease. Milton has acknowledged to me that Spenser was his original; and many besides myself have heard our famous Waller own, that he derives the harmony of his numbers from the Godfrey of Bulloign, which was turned into English by Mr Fairfax. But to return: Having done with Ovid for this time, it came into my mind, that our English poet Chaucer in many things resembled him, and that with no disadvantage on the side of the modern author, as I shall endeavour to prove when I compare them: And as I am, and always have been, studious to promote the honour of my native country, so I soon resolved to put their merits to the trial, by turning some of

Canterbury tales into our language, as it is now refined; for, by this means, both the poets being set in the same light, and dressed in the same English habit, story to be compared with story, a certain judgment may be made betwixt them, by the reader, without obtruding my opinion on him; or, if I seem partial to my country-man, and predecessor in the laurel, the friends of antiquity are not few; and, besides many of the learned, Ovid has almost all the beaux, and the whole fair sex his declared patrons. Perhaps I have assumed somewhat more to myself than they allow me; because I have ventured to sum up the evidence: But the readers are the jury; and their privilege remains entire to decide according to the merits of the cause; or, if they please to bring it another hearing, before some other court. In the mean time, to follow the thread of my discourse, (as thoughts, according to Mr Hobbs, have always some connection) so from Chaucer I was led to think on Boccace, who was not only his contemporary, but also pursued the same studies; wrote novels in prose, and many works in verse; particularly, is said to have invented the octave rhyme, or stanza of eight lines, which ever since has been maintained by the practice of all Italian writers, who are, or at least assume the title of heroic Poets: He and Chaucer, among other things, had this in common, that they refined their mother-tongues: but with this difference, that Dante had begun to file their language, at least in verse, before the time of Boccace, who likewise received no little help from his master Petrarch: But the reformation of their prose was wholly owing to Boccace himself, who is yet the standard of purity in the

Italian tongue; though many of his phrases are become obsolete, as in process of time it must needs happen. Chaucer (as you have formerly been told by our learned Mr Rhymer) first adorned and amplified our barren tongue from the Provencall, which was then the most polished of all the modern languages: But this subject has been copiously treated by that great critic, who deserves no little commendation from us his countrymen. For these reasons of time, and resemblance of genius, in Chaucer and Boccace, I resolved to join them in my present work; to which I have added some original papers of my own; which, whether they are equal or inferior to my other poems, an author is the most improper judge; and therefore I leave them wholly to the mercy of the reader. I will hope the best, that they will not be condemned; but, if they should, I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators, that they would count fourscore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number, a cripple in my limbs; but what decays are in my mind the reader must determine. I think myself as vigorous as ever in the faculties of my soul, excepting only my memory, which is not impair'd to any great degree; and, if I lose not more of it, I have no great reason to complain. What judgment I had, increases rather than diminishes; and thoughts, such as they are, come crowding in so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to chuse or to reject; to run them into verse, or to give them the other harmony of prose. I have so long studi-

ed and practised both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me. In short, though I may lawfully plead some part of the old gentleman's excuse: yet I will reserve it till I think I have greater need, and ask no grains of allowance for the faults of this my present work, but those which are given of course to human frailty. I will not trouble my reader with the shortness of time in which I writ it; or the several intervals of sickness: They who think too well of their own performances, are apt to boast in their prefaces how little time their works have cost them, and what other business of more importance interfered; but the reader will be apt to ask the question, why they allowed not a longer time to make their works more perfect? and why they had so despicable an opinion of their judges, as to thrust their indigested stuff upon them, as if they deserved no better?

With this account of my present undertaking, I conclude the first part of this discourse: In the second part, as at a second sitting, though I alter not the draught, I must touch the same features over again, and change the dead-colouring of the whole. In general I will only say, that I have written nothing which favours of immorality or profaneness; at least, I am not conscious to myself of any such intention. If there happen to be found an irreverent expression, or a thought too wanton, they are crept into my verses through my inadvertency: If the searchers find any in the cargo, let them be staved or forfeited, like counterbanded goods; at least, let their authors be answerable for them, as being but imported merchandize, and not of my own manufacture. On the other side,

I have endeavour'd to chuse such fables, both ancient and modern, as contain in each of them some instructive moral which I could prove by induction, but the way is tedious; and they leap foremost into sight, without the reader's trouble of looking after them. I wish I could affirm with a safe conscience, that I had taken the same care in all my former writings; for it must be own'd, that, supposing verses are never so beautiful or pleasing, yet, if they contain any thing which shocks religion, or good manners, they are at best, what Horace says of good numbers without good sense, *Versus inopes rerum, nugaeque canorae*. Thus far, I hope, I am right in court, without renouncing my other right of self-defence, where I have been wrongfully accus'd, and my sense wire-drawn into blasphemy or bawdry, as it has often been by a religious lawyer, in a late pleading against the stage; in which he mixes truth with falshood, and has not forgotten the old rule, of calumniating strongly, that something may remain.

I resume the thread of my discourse with the first of my translations, which was the first Iliad of Homer. If it shall please God to give me longer life, and moderate health, my intentions are to translate the whole Iliad; provided still, that I meet with those encouragements from the public, which may enable me to proceed in my undertaking with some chearfulness. And this I dare assure the world before-hand, that I have found by trial Homer a more pleasing task than Virgil, (though I say not the translation will be less laborious.) For the Grecian is more according to my genius, than the Latin Poet. In the works of the two

authors we may read their manners, and natural inclinations, which are wholly different. Virgil was of a quiet, sedate temper; Homer was violent, impetuous, and full of fire. The chief talent of Virgil was propriety of thoughts, and ornament of words: Homer was rapid in his thoughts, and took all the liberties both of numbers, and of expressions, which his language, and the age in which he lived allowed him: Homer's invention was more copious, Virgil's more confined: So that, if Homer had not led the way, it was not in Virgil to have begun heroic poetry: For nothing can be more evident, than that the Roman poem is but the second part of the Ilias; a continuation of the same story; and the persons already formed: The manners of Æneas, are those of Hector, superadded to those which Homer gave him. The adventures of Ulysses in the Odysseis, are imitated in the first six books of Virgil's Æneas: And though the accidents are not the same, (which would have argued him of a servile, copying, and total barrenness of invention) yet the seas were the same in which both the heroes wandered; and Dido cannot be denied to be the poetical daughter of Calypso. The six latter books of Virgil's poem are the four and twenty Iliads contracted: A quarrel occasioned by a lady, a single combat, battles fought, and a town besieged. I say not this in derogation to Virgil; neither do I contradict any thing which I have formerly said in his just praise: For his episodes are almost wholly of his own invention; and the form which he has given to the telling, makes the tale his own, even though the original story had been the same. But this proves, however, that Homer taught Virgil to design: And if invention

be the first virtue of an epic poet, then the Latin poem can only be allowed the second place. Mr Hobbs, in the preface to his own bald translation of the Iliad, (studying poetry as he did mathematics, when it was too late,) Mr Hobbs, I say, begins the praise of Homer where he should have ended it. He tells us, that the first beauty of an epic poem consists in diction, that is, in the choice of words, and harmony of numbers. Now, the words are the colouring of the work, which, in the order of nature, is last to be considered. The design, the disposition, the manners, and the thoughts, are all before it: Where any of those are wanting or imperfect, so much wants or is imperfect in the imitation of human life; which is in the very definition of a poem. Words indeed, like glaring colours, are the first beauties that arise, and strike the sight; but, if the draught be false or lame, the figures ill disposed, the manners obscure or inconsistent, or the thoughts unnatural, then the finest colours are but dawbing, and the piece is a beautiful monster at the best. Neither Virgil nor Homer were deficient in any of the former beauties; but in this last, which is expression, the Roman poet is at least equal to the Grecian, as I have said elsewhere; supplying the poverty of his language by his musical ear, and by his diligence. But to return: Our two great poets, being so different in their tempers, one choleric and sanguine, the other phlegmatic and melancholic; that which makes them excel in their several ways, is, that each of them has followed his own natural inclination, as well in forming the design, as in the execution of it. The very heroes shew their authors; Achilles is hot, impatient, revengeful, *impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,*

&c. Aeneas patient, considerate, careful of his people, and merciful to his enemies; ever submissive to the will of heaven, *quo fata trahunt retrahuntque, sequamur.* I could please myself with enlarging on this subject, but am forced to defer it to a fitter time. From all I have said, I will only draw this inference, that the action of Homer, being more full of vigour than that of Virgil, according to the temper of the writer, is of consequence more pleasing to the reader. One warms you by degrees; the other sets you on fire all at once, and never intermits his heat. 'Tis the same difference which Longinus makes betwixt the effects of eloquence in Demosthenes and Tully. One persuades; the other commands. Ybu never cool while you read Homer, even not in the second book, (a graceful flattery to his countrymen;) but he hastens from the ships, and concludes not that book till he has made you an amends by the violent playing of a new machine. From thence he hurries on his action with variety of events, and ends it in less compass than two months. This vehemence of his, I confess, is more suitable to my temper: And therefore, I have translated his first book with greater pleasure than any part of Virgil: But it was not a pleasure without pains: The continual agitations of the spirits, must needs be a weakening of any constitution, especially in age: And many pauses are required for refreshments betwixt the heats; the Iliad, of itself, being a third part longer than all Virgil's works together.

This is what I thought needful in this place to say of Homer. I proceed to Ovid and Chaucer; considering the former only in relation to the latter. With Ovid

ended the golden age of the Roman tongue: From Chaucer the purity of the English tongue began. The manners of the poets were not unlike: Both of them were well-bred, well-natured, amorous, and libertine, at least in their writings, it may be also in their lives. Their studies were the same, philosophy and philology. Both of them were knowing in astronomy, of which Ovid's books of the Roman-feasts, and Chaucer's treatise of the Astrolabe, are sufficient witnesses. But Chaucer was likewise an astrologer, as were Virgil, Horace, Persius, and Manilius. Both writ with wonderful facility and clearness; neither were great inventors: For Ovid only copied the Grecian fables; and most of Chaucer's stories were taken from his Italian contemporaries, or their predecessors: Boccace his Decameron was first published; and from thence our Englishman has borrowed many of his Canterbury tales: Yet that of Palamon and Arcite was written, in all probability, by some Italian wit, in a former age; as I shall prove hereafter: The tale of Grizild was the invention of Petrarch; by him sent to Boccace; from whom it came to Chaucer: Troilus and Cressida was also written by a Lombard author; but much amplified by our English translator, as well as beautified; the genius of our countrymen in general being rather to improve an invention, than to invent themselves; as is evident, not only in our poetry, but in many of our manufactures. I find I have anticipated already, and taken up Boccace before I come to him: But there is so much less behind; and I am of the temper of most kings, who love to be in debt, are all for present money, no matter how they pay it afterwards: Besides,

the nature of a preface is rambling; never wholly out of the way, nor in it. This I have learned from the practice of honest Montaign, and return at my pleasure to Ovid and Chaucer, of whom I have little more to say. Both of them built on the inventions of other men; yet, since Chaucer had something of his own, as the Wife of Bath's tale, the Cock and the Fox, which I have translated, and some others, I may justly give our countryman the precedence in that part; since I can remember nothing of Ovid which was wholly his. Both of them understood the manners; under which name I comprehend the passions, and, in a larger sense, the descriptions of persons, and their very habits: For an example, I see Baucis and Philemon as perfectly before me, as if some ancient painter had drawn them; and all the pilgrims in the Canterbury tales, their humours, their features, and the very dress, as distinctly as if I had supped with them at the Tabard in Southwark: Yet even there too the figures of Chaucer are much more lively, and set in a better light: which, tho' I have not time to prove; yet I appeal to the reader, and am sure he will clear me from partiality. The thoughts and words remain to be considered, in the comparison of the two poets; and I have saved myself one half of that labour, by owning that Ovid lived when the Roman tongue was in its meridian; Chaucer in the dawning of our language: Therefore, that part of the comparison stands not on an equal foot, any more than the diction of Ennius and Ovid; or of Chaucer, and our present English. The words are given up, as a post not to be defended in our poet, because he wanted the modern art of fortifying. The thoughts remain to be

considered: And they are to be measured only by their propriety; that is, as they flow more or less naturally from the persons described, on such and such occasions. The vulgar judges, which are nine parts in ten of all nations, who call conceits and jingles wit, who see Ovid full of them, and Chaucer altogether without them, will think me little less than mad, for preferring the Englishman to the Roman: Yet, with their leave, I must presume to say, that the things they admire are only glittering trifles, and so far from being witty, that, in a serious poem, they are nauseous, because they are unnatural. Would any man, who is ready to die for love, describe his passion like Narcissus? Would he think of *inopem me copia fecit*, and a dozen more of such expressions, poured on the neck of one another, and signifying all the same thing? If this were wit, was this a time to be witty, when the poor wretch was in the agony of death? This is just John Littlewit in Bartholomew Fair, who had a conceit (as he tells you) left him in his misery; a miserable conceit. On these occasions, the poet should endeavour to raise pity: But, instead of this, Ovid is tickling you to laugh. Virgil never made use of such machines, when he was moving you to commiserate the death of Dido: He would not destroy what he was building. Chaucer makes Arcite violent in his love, and unjust in the pursuit of it: Yet, when he came to die, he made him think more reasonably: He repents not of his love, for that had altered his character; but acknowledges the injustice of his proceedings, and resigns Emilia to Palamon. What would Ovid have done on this occasion? he would certainly have made Arcite witty on his death-bed. He

had complained he was farther off from possession, by being so near, and a thousand such boyisms, which Chaucer rejected as below the dignity of the subject. They who think otherwise, would, by the same reason, prefer Lucian and Ovid to Homer and Virgil, and Martial to all four of them. As for the turn of words, in which Ovid particularly excels all poets; they are sometimes a fault, and sometimes a beauty, as they are used properly or improperly; but in strong passions always to be shunned, because passions are serious, and will admit no playing. The French have a high value for them; and I confess, they are often what they call delicate, when they are introduced with judgment; but Chaucer writ with more simplicity, and followed nature more closely, than to use them. I have thus far, to the best of my knowledge, been an upright judge betwixt the parties in competition, not meddling with the design nor the disposition of it; because the design was not their own; and in the disposing of it they were equal. It remains that I say somewhat of Chaucer in particular.

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil: He is a perpetual fountain of good sense; learn'd in all sciences; and therefore speaks properly on all subjects: As he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off; a continence which is practis'd by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. One of our late great poets is sunk in his reputation, because he cou'd never forgive any conceit which came in his way; but swept, like a drag-net,

great and small. There was plenty enough; but the dishes were ill sorted; whole pyramids of sweet-meats, for boys and women; but little of solid meat, for men: All this proceeded not from any want of knowledge, but of judgment; neither did he want that in discerning the beauties and faults of other poets; but only indulg'd himself in the luxury of writing; and perhaps knew it was a fault, but hop'd the reader would not find it. For this reason, though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteem'd a good writer; and for ten impressions, which his works have had in so many successive years, yet at present a hundred books are scarcely purchas'd once a twelvemonth: For, as my last Lord Rochester said, though somewhat profanely, *Not being of God, he could not stand.*

Chaucer follow'd nature every where; but was never so bold to go beyond her: And there is a great difference of being *poeta* and *nimis poeta*, if we may believe Catullus, as much as betwixt a modest behaviour and affectation. The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us; but 'tis like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*: They who liv'd with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so even in our judgement, if compar'd with the numbers of Lidgate and Gower his contemporaries: There is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. 'Tis true, I cannot go so far as he who publish'd the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine: But this opinion is not worth con-

fluting; 'tis so gross and obvious an error, that common sense (which is a rule in every thing but matters of faith and revelation) must convince the reader, that equality of numbers in every verse which we call heroic, was either not known, or not always practis'd in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses, which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronounciation can make otherwise. We can only say, that he liv'd in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first. We must be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in process of time a Lucilius, and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer, there was a Spencer, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being: And our numbers were in their nonage till these last appear'd. I need say little of his parentage, life, and fortunes: They are to be found at large in all the editions of his works. He was employ'd abroad, and favour'd by Edward the third, Richard the second, and Henry the fourth; and was poet, as I suppose, to all three of them. In Richard's time, I doubt, he was a little dipt in the rebellion of the Commons; and being brother-in-law to John of Ghaunt, it was no wonder if he follow'd the fortunes of that family; and was well with Henry the fourth when he had depos'd his predecessor. Neither is it to be admir'd, that Henry, who was a wise as well as a valiant Prince, who claim'd by succession, and was sensible that his title was not sound, but was rightfully in Mortimer, who had married the heir of York; it was not to be admir'd, I say, if that great politician should be pleas'd.

to have the greatest wit of those times in his interests, and to be the trumpet of his praises. Augustus had given him the example, by the advice of Mecaenas, who recommended Virgil and Horace to him; whose praises helped to make him popular while he was alive, and after his death have made him precious to posterity. As for the religion of our Poet, he seems to have some little bias towards the opinions of Wickliff, after John of Ghaunt his patron; somewhat of which appears in the tale of Piers Plowman; yet I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the vices of the clergy in his age: Their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly interest, deserved the lashes which he gave them, both in that, and in most of his Canterbury tales: Neither has his contemporary Boccace spared them. Yet both those Poets lived in much esteem, with good and holy men in orders: For the scandal which is given by particular priests, reflects not on the sacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Chanon, and his Fryar, took not from the character of his Good Parson. A satirical poet is the check of the laymen on bad priests. We are only to take care, that we involve not the innocent with the guilty in the same condemnation. The good cannot be too much honoured, nor the bad too coarsely used; for the corruption of the best becomes the worst. When a clergy-man is whipped, his gown is first taken off, by which the dignity of his order is secured: If he be wrongfully accused, he has his action of slander; and 'tis at the poet's peril, if he transgress the law. But they will tell us, that all kind of satire, though never so well deserved by particular

priests, yet brings the whole order into contempt. Is then the peerage of England any thing dishonoured, when a peer suffers for his treason? If he be libelled, or any way defamed, he has his *Scandalum Magnatum* to punish the offender. They who use this kind of argument, seem to be conscious to themselves of somewhat which has deserved the poet's lash; and are less concerned for their public capacity, than for their private; at least, there is pride at the bottom of their reasoning. If the faults of men in orders are only to be judged among themselves, they are all in some sort parties: For, since they say the honour of their order is concerned in every member of it, how can we be sure, that they will be impartial judges? How far I may be allowed to speak my opinion in this case, I know not: But I am sure a dispute of this nature caused mischief in abundance betwixt a King of England and an Archbishop of Canterbury; one standing up for the laws of his land, and the other for the honour (as he called it) of God's Church; which ended in the murder of the Prelate, and in the whipping of his Majesty from post to pillar for his penance. The learned and ingenious Dr Drake has saved me the labour of inquiring into the esteem and reverence which the priests have had of old; and I would rather extend than diminish any part of it: Yet I must needs say, that, when a priest provokes me without any occasion given him, I have no reason, unless it be the charity of a Christian, to forgive him: *Prior laesit* is justification sufficient in the civil law. If I answer him in his own language, self-defence, I am sure, must be allowed me; and if I carry it farther, even to a sharp recrimination,

somewhat may be indulged to human frailty. Yet my resentment has not wrought so far, but that I have followed Chaucer in his character of a holy man, and have enlarged on that subject with some pleasure, reserving to myself the right, if I shall think fit hereafter, to describe another sort of priests, such as are more easily to be found than the good parson; such as have given the last blow to Christianity in this age, by a practice so contrary to their doctrine. But this will keep cold till another time. In the mean while, I take up Chaucer where I left him. He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his Canterbury tales the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole English nation, in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very physiognomies, and persons. Baptista Porta could not have described their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: Their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is

different: The Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are several men, and distinguished from each other, as much as the mincing Lady Priorefs, and the broad-speaking gap-tooth'd Wife of Bath. But enough of this: There is such a variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our fore-fathers and great grand-dames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are still remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other names than those of monks, and fryars, and chanons, and lady abbeffes, and nuns; for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of nature, though every thing is altered. May I have leave to do myself the justice, (since my enemies will do me none, and are so far from granting me to be a good poet, that they will not allow me so much as to be a Christian, or a moral man), may I have leave, I say, to inform my reader, that I have confined my choice to such tales of Chaucer as favour nothing of immodesty. If I had desired more to please than to instruct, the Reeve, the Miller, the Shipman, the Merchant, the Sumner, and above all, the Wife of Bath, in the prologue to her tale, would have procured me as many friends and readers, as there are beaux and ladies of pleasure in the town. But I will no more offend against good manners: I am sensible, as I ought to be, of the scandal I have given by my loose writings; and make what reparation I am able, by this public acknowledgment. If any thing of this nature, or of profaneness, be crept into these poems, I am so far

from defending it, that I disown it: *Totum hoc indicatum volo.* Chaucer makes another manner of apology for his broad-speaking, and Boccace makes the like; but I will follow neither of them. Our countryman, in the end of his characters, before the Canterbury tales, thus excuses the ribaldry, which is very gross, in many of his novels.

But first, I pray you, of your courtesy,
That ye ne arrete it nought my villany,
Though that I plainly speak in this matter
To tellen you her words, and eke her chere:
Ne though I speak her words properly,
For this ye knowen as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse as nye as ever he can:
Everich word of it been in his charge,
All speke he, never so rudely, ne large.
Or else he mote tellen his tale untrue,
Or feine things, or find words new:
He may not spare, altho he were his brother,
He mote as well say o word as another.
Christ spake himself full broad in holy writ,
And well I wot no villany is it.
Eke Plato saith, who so can him rede,
The words mote been counin to the dede.

Yet if a man should have enquired of Boccace or of Chaucer, what need they had of introducing such characters, where obscene words were proper in their mouths, but very undecent to be heard, I know not what answer they could have made; for that reason, such tales shall be left untold by me. You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete,

that his sense is scarce to be understood ; and you have likewise more than one example of his unequal numbers, which were mentioned before. Yet many of his verses consist of ten syllables, and the words not much behind our present English : As for example, these two lines, in the description of the carpenter's young wife :

Wincing she was, as is a jolly colt,

Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.

I have almost done with Chaucer, when I have answered some objections relating to my present work. I find some people are offended that I have turned these tales into modern English ; because they think them unworthy of my pains, and look on Chaucer as a dry, old-fashioned wit, not worth receiving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leicester say, that Mr Cowley himself was of that opinion ; who having read him over at my Lord's request, declared he had no taste of him. I dare not advance my opinion against the judgment of so great an author ; but I think it fair, however, to leave the decision to the public : Mr Cowley was too modest to set up for a dictator ; and being shocked perhaps with his old style, never examined into the depth of his good sense. Chaucer, I confess, is a rough diamond, and must first be polished e'er he shines. I deny not likewise, that, living in our early days of poetry, he writes not always of a piece ; but sometimes mingles trivial things with those of greater moment. Sometimes also, though not often, he runs riot, like Ovid, and knows not when he has said enough. But there are more great wits, beside Chaucer, whose fault is their excess of conceits, and those ill sorted. An author is not to

write all he can, but only all he ought. Having observed this redundancy in Chaucer, (as it is an easy matter for a man of ordinary parts to find a fault in one of greater), I have not tied myself to a literal translation; but have often omitted what I judged unnecessary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts. I have presumed farther in some places, and added somewhat of my own, where I thought my author was deficient, and had not given his thoughts their true lustre, for want of words in the beginning of our language. And to this I was the more emboldened, because, (if I may be permitted to say it of myself), I found I had a soul congenial to his, and that I had been conversant in the same studies. Another Poet, in another age, may take the same liberty with my writings, if at least they live long enough to deserve correction. It was also necessary sometimes to restore the sense of Chaucer, which was lost or mangled in the errors of the press: Let this example suffice at present in the story of Palamon and Arcite, where the temple of Diana is described, you find these verses, in all the editions of our author:

There saw I Dane turned unto a tree,
I mean not the goddess Diane,
But Venus daughter, which that hight Dane.

Which after a little consideration I knew was to be reformed into this sense, that Daphne the daughter of Peneus was turned into a tree. I durst not make thus bold with Ovid, lest some future Milbourn should arise, and say, I varied from my author, because I understood him not.

But there are other judges who think I ought not to have translated Chaucer into English, out of a quite contrary notion : They suppose there is a certain veneration due to his old language ; and that it is little less than profanation and sacrilege to alter it. They are farther of opinion, that somewhat of his good sense will suffer in this transfusion, and much of the beauty of his thoughts will infallibly be lost, which appear with more grace in their old habit. Of this opinion was that excellent person, whom I mentioned, the late Earl of Leicester, who valued Chaucer as much as Cowley despised him. My Lord dissuaded me from this attempt, (for I was thinking of it some years before his death), and his authority prevailed so far with me, as to defer my undertaking while he lived, in deference to him ; yet my reason was not convinced with what he urged against it. If the first end of a writer be to be understood, then, as his language grows obsolete, his thoughts must grow obscure, *multa renascuntur quae nunc cecidere, cadentque quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus ; quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi*. When an ancient word, for its sound and significancy, deserves to be reviv'd, I have that reasonable veneration for antiquity to restore it. All beyond this is superstition. Words are not like land-marks, so sacred as never to be remov'd : Customs are chang'd, and even statutes are silently repeal'd, when the reason ceases for which they were enacted. As for the other part of the argument, that his thoughts will lose of their original beauty, by the innovation of words ; in the first place, not only their beauty, but their being is lost, where they are no

longer understood, which is the present case. I grant, that something must be lost in all transference, that is, in all translations; but the sense will remain, which would otherwise be lost, or at least be maim'd, when it is scarce intelligible; and that but to a few. How few are there who can read Chaucer, so as to understand him perfectly? and if imperfectly, then with less profit, and no pleasure. 'Tis not for the use of some old Saxon friends, that I have taken these pains with him; let them neglect my version, because they have no need of it. I made it for their sakes who understand sense and poetry as well as they, when that poetry and sense is put into words which they understand. I will go farther, and dare to add, that what beauties I lose in some places, I give to others which had them not originally: But in this I may be partial to myself; let the reader judge, and I submit to his decision. Yet I think I have just occasion to complain of them, who, because they understand Chaucer, would deprive the greater part of their countrymen of the same advantage, and hoard him up, as misers do their grandam gold, only to look on it themselves, and hinder others from making use of it. In sum, I seriously protest, that no man ever had, or can have, a greater veneration for Chaucer than myself. I have translated some part of his works, only that I might perpetuate his memory, or at least refresh it, amongst my countrymen. If I have altered him any where for the better, I must at the same time acknowledge, that I could have done nothing without him: *Facile est inventis addere*, is no great commendation; and I am not so vain to think I have deserv'd a greater. I

will conclude what I have to say of him singly, with this one remark: A lady of my acquaintance, who keeps a kind of correspondence with some authors of the fair sex in France, has been inform'd by them, that Mademoiselle de Scudery, who is as old as Sibyl, and inspir'd like her by the same god of poetry, is at this time translating Chaucer into modern French. From which I gather, that he has been formerly translated into the old Provencal, (for how she should come to understand old English, I know not.) But the matter of fact being true, it makes me think, that there is something in it like fatality; that, after certain periods of time, the fame and memory of great wits should be renew'd, as Chaucer is both in France and England. If this be wholly chance, 'tis extraordinary; and I dare not call it more, for fear of being tax'd with superstition.

Boccace comes last to be considered, who, living in the same age with Chaucer, had the same genius, and followed the same studies. Both writ novels, and each of them cultivated his mother-tongue. But the greatest resemblance of our two modern authors being in their familiar style, and pleasing way of relating comical familiar adventures, I may pass it over, because I have translated nothing from Boccace of that nature. In the serious part of poetry, the advantage is wholly on Chaucer's side; for though the Englishman has borrowed many tales from the Italian, yet it appears that those of Boccace were not generally of his own making, but taken from authors of former ages, and by him only modelled: So that what there was of invention in either of them may be judged equal.

But Chaucer has refined on Boccace, and has mended the stories which he has borrowed, in his way of telling; though prose allows more liberty of thought, and the expression is more easy, when unconfined by numbers. Our countryman carries weight, and yet wins the race at disadvantage. I desire not the reader should take my word; and therefore I will set two of their discourses on the same subject, in the same light, for every man to judge betwixt them. I translated Chaucer first, and amongst the rest, pitched on the Wife of Bath's tale; not daring, as I have said, to adventure on her prologue, because it is too licentious: There Chaucer introduces an old woman of mean parentage, whom a youthful Knight of noble blood was forced to marry, and consequently loathed her. The crone being in bed with him on the wedding night, and finding his aversion, endeavours to win his affection by reason, and speaks a good word for herself, (as who could blame her?) in hope to mollify the fullen bridegroom. She takes her topiques from the benefits of poverty, the advantages of old age and ugliness, the vanity of youth, and the silly pride of ancestry and titles without inherent virtue, which is the true nobility. When I had closed Chaucer, I returned to Ovid, and translated some more of his fables; and by this time had so far forgotten the Wife of Bath's tale, that when I took up Boccace, unawares I fell on the same argument of preferring virtue to nobility of blood, and titles, in the story of Sigismonda; which I had certainly avoided, for the resemblance of the two discourses, if my memory had not failed me. Let the reader weigh them both; and if he

thinks me partial to Chaucer, it is in him to right Boccace.

I prefer in our countryman, far above all his other stories, the noble poem of Palamon and Arcite, which is of the epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the Ilias or the Æneis: The story is more pleasing than either of them, the manners as perfect, the diction as poetical, the learning as deep and various; and the disposition full as artful: Only it includes a greater length of time, as taking up seven years at least; but Aristotle has left undecided the duration of the action; which is yet easily reduced into the compass of a year, by a narration of what preceded the return of Palamon to Athens. I had thought, for the honour of our nation, and more particularly for his whose laurel, though unworthy, I have worn after him, that this story was of English growth, and Chaucer's own: But I was deceived by Boccace; for, casually looking on the end of his seventh Giornata, I found Dioneo (under which name he shadows himself) and Fiametta (who represents his mistress, the natural daughter of Robert King of Naples,) of whom these words are spoken. *Dioneo e Fiametta gran pezza cantarono insieme d' Arcita, e di Palamone*: By which it appears that this story was written before the time of Boccace; but the name of its author being wholly lost, Chaucer is now become an original; and I question not but the poem has received many beauties by passing through his noble hands. Besides this tale, there is another of his own invention, after the manner of the Provencalls, called the Flower and the Leaf; with which I was so particularly pleased, both for the invention and the moral,

that I cannot hinder myself from recommending it to the reader.

As a corollary to this preface, in which I have done justice to others, I owe somewhat to myself: Not that I think it worth my time to enter the lists with one M-----, or one E-----, but barely to take notice, that such men there are, who have written scurrilously against me without any provocation. M-----, who is in orders, pretends, amongst the rest, this quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul on priesthood: If I have, I am only to ask pardon of good priests, and am afraid his part of the reparation will come to little. Let him be satisfied, that he shall not be able to force himself upon me for an adversary. I condemn him too much to enter into competition with him. His own translations of Virgil have answered his criticisms on mine. If (as they say, he has declared in print) he prefers the version of Ogilby to mine, the world has made him the same compliment: For 'tis agreed on all hands, that he writes even below Ogilby. That, you will say, is not easily to be done; but what cannot M----- bring about? I am satisfied, however, that, while he and I live together, I shall not be thought the worst poet of the age. It looks as if I had desired him underhand to write so ill against me; but upon my honest word I have not bribed him to do me this service, and am wholly guiltless of his pamphlet. 'Tis true, I should be glad if I could persuade him to continue his good offices, and write such another critic on any thing of mine; for I find by experience he has a great stroke with the reader, when he condemns any of my poems, to make the world have a better opinion of them. He

has taken some pains with my poetry; but no body will be persuaded to take the same with his. If I had taken to the church, (as he affirms, but which was never in my thoughts), I should have had more sense, if not more grace, than to have turned myself out of my benefice by writing libels on my parishioners. But his account of my manners and my principles are of a piece with his cavils and his poetry; and so I have done with him for ever.

As for the city-bard, or knight-physician, I hear his quarrel to me is, that I was the author of *Abfalom* and *Achitophel*, which he thinks is a little hard on his fanatic patrons in London.

But I will deal the more civilly with his two poems, because nothing ill is to be spoken of the dead; and therefore, peace be to the manes of his *Arthurs*. I will only say, that it was not for this noble knight that I drew the plan of an epic poem on King Arthur, in my preface to the translation of *Juvenal*. The guardian-angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage; and therefore he rejected them, as *Dares* did the whirlbats of *Eryx*, when they were thrown before him by *Entellus*; yet from that preface he plainly took his hint; for he began immediately upon the story, tho' he had the baseness not to acknowledge his benefactor, but, instead of it, to traduce me in a libel.

I shall say the less of Mr Collier, because, in many things, he has tax'd me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine, which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality; and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him

no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one. Yet it were not difficult to prove, that, in many places, he has perverted my meaning by his glosses, and interpreted my words into blasphemy and baudry, of which they were not guilty. Besides that, he is too much given to horse-play in his raillery; and comes to battle, like a dictator from the plough. I will not say, *the zeal of God's house has eaten him up*; but I am sure it has devoured some part of his good manners and civility. It might also be doubted, whether it were altogether zeal which prompted him to this rough manner of proceeding: Perhaps it became not one of his function to rake into the rubbish of ancient and modern plays; a divine might have employed his pains to better purpose, than in the nastiness of Plautus and Aristophanes; whose examples, as they excuse not me, so it might be possibly supposed that he read them not without some pleasure. They who have written commentaries on those poets, or on Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, have explained some vices, which, without their interpretation, had been unknown to modern times. Neither has he judged impartially betwixt the former age and us.

There is more baudry in one play of Fletcher's, called *The Custom of the Country*, than in all ours together. Yet this has been often acted on the stage in my remembrance. Are the times so much more reformed now than they were five and twenty years ago? If they are, I congratulate the amendment of our morals. But I am not to prejudice the cause of my fellow-poets, tho'

I abandon my own defence: They have some of them answered for themselves, and neither they nor I can think Mr Collier so formidable an enemy, that we should shun him. He has lost ground at the latter end of the day, by pursuing his point too far, like the Prince of Conde at the battle of Senneph: From immoral plays, to no plays; *ab abusu ad usum, non valet consequentia*. But, being a party, I am not to erect myself into a judge. As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels, that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them. B----- and M----- are only distinguished from the crowd, by being remembered to their infamy.

-----Demetri, teque, Tigelli,

Discipularum inter jubeo plorare cathedras.

TO
HER GRACE
THE
DUTCHESSES
OF
ORMOND,
WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

MADAM,

THE bard who first adorn'd our native tongue
Tun'd to his British lyre this ancient song :

Which Homer might without a blush rehearse,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's verse :
He match'd their beauties, where they most excel;
Of love sung better, and of arms as well.

Vouchsafe, illustrious Ormond, to behold
What pow'r the charms of beauty had of old ;
Nor wonder if such deeds of arms were done,
Inspir'd by two fair eyes, that sparkled like your own.

If Chaucer by the best idea wrought,
And poets can divine each others thought,
The fairest nymph before his eyes he set ;
And then the fairest was Plantagenet ;
Who three contending princes made her prize,
And rul'd the rival nations with her eyes ;

Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the noblest order gave the name.

Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conquests, and extend your own :
As when the stars, in their ethereal race,
At length have roll'd around the liquid space,
At certain periods they resume their place,
From the same point of heav'n their course advance,
And move in measures of their former dance :
Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
Restor'd in you, and the same place adorns ;
Or you perform her office in the sphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new Platonic year.

O true Plantagenet, O race divine,
(For beauty still is fatal to the line,)
Had Chaucer liv'd that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you :
Or had you liv'd, to judge the doubtful right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight :
And conqu'ring Theseus from his side had sent
Your gen'rous lord, to guide the Theban government.

Time shall accomplish that ; and I shall see
A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.

Already have the Fates your path prepar'd,
And sure presage your future sway declar'd :
When westward, like the sun, you took your way,
And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the signal from the shore,
The ready Nereids heard, and swam before,
To smooth the seas ; a soft Etesian gale
But just inspir'd, and gently swell'd the sail ;

THE DUTCHESS OF ORMOND. 51

Portunus took his turn, whose ample hand
Heav'd up the lighten'd keel, and sunk the sand,
And steer'd the sacred vessel safe to land.

The land, if not restrain'd, had met your way,
Projected out a neck, and jutt'd to the sea.

Hibernia, prostrate at your feet, ador'd,
In you, the pledge of her expected Lord;

Due to her isle; a venerable name;

His father and his grandsire known to fame:

Aw'd by that house, accusom'd to command,

The sturdy Kerns in due subjection stand;

Nor bear the reins in any foreign hand.

At your approach, they crowded to the port;

And scarcely landed, you create a court:

As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run;

For Venus is the promise of the Sun.

The waste of civil wars, their towns destroy'd,

Pales unhonour'd, Ceres unemploy'd,

Were all forgot; and one triumphant day

Wip'd all the tears of three campaigns away.

Blood, rapines, massacres, were cheaply bought,

So mighty recompence your beauty brought.

As when the dove returning, bore the mark

Of earth restor'd to the long-lab'ring ark,

The relics of mankind, secure of rest,

Op'd ev'ry window to receive the guest,

And the fair bearer of the message blest'd:

So, when you came, with loud repeated cries,

The nation took an omen from your eyes,

And God advanc'd his rainbow in the skies,

To sign inviolable peace restor'd;

The saints with solemn shouts proclaim'd the new ac-

[cord.

When at your second coming you appear,
 (For I foretel that millenary year)
 The sharpen'd share shall vex the soil no more,
 But earth unbidden shall produce her store :
 The land shall laugh, the circling ocean smile,
 And Heav'n's indulgence blefs the holy isle.

Heav'n from all ages has reserv'd for you
 That happy clime, which venom never knew;
 Or, if it had been there, your eyes alone
 Have pow'r to chase all poison, but their own.

Now in this interval, which Fate has cast
 Betwixt your future glories, and your past,
 This pause of pow'r, 'tis Ireland's hour to mourn;
 While England celebrates your safe return,
 By which you seem the seasons to command,
 And bring our summers back to their forsaken land.

The vanquish'd isle our leisure must attend,
 Till the fair blessing we vouchsafe to send;
 Nor can we spare you long, tho' often we may lend. }
 The dove was twice employ'd abroad, before
 The world was dry'd; and she return'd no more.

Nor dare we trust so soft a messenger,
 New from her sickness to that northern air;
 Rest here a while, your lustre to restore,
 That they may see you as you shone before:
 For yet, th' eclipse not wholly past, you wade
 Thro' some remains, and dimness of a shade.

A subject in his prince may claim a right,
 Nor suffer him with strength impair'd to fight;
 Till force returns, his ardour we restrain,
 And curb his warlike wish to cross the main.

Now past the danger, let the learn'd begin
 Th' enquiry, where disease could enter in ;
 How those malignant atoms forc'd their way, [prey ?
 What in the faultless frame they found to make their
 Where ev'ry element was weigh'd so well,
 That Heav'n alone, who mix'd the mass, could tell }
 Which of the four ingredients could rebel ;
 And where, imprison'd in so sweet a cage,
 A soul might well be pleas'd to pass an age.

And yet the fine materials made it weak ;
 Porcelain by being pure, is apt to break :
 Ev'n to your breast the sickness durst aspire ;
 And forc'd from that fair temple to retire, }
 Profanely set the holy place on fire.
 In vain your Lord like young Vespasian mourn'd,
 When the fierce flames the sanctuary burn'd ;
 And I prepar'd to pay in verses rude
 A most detested act of gratitude :

Ev'n this had been your elegy, which now
 Is offer'd for your health, the table of my vow.

Your angel sure our Morley's mind inspir'd,
 To find the remedy your ill requir'd ;
 As once the Macedon, by Jove's decree,
 Was taught to dream an herb for Ptolomee :
 Or Heav'n, which had such over-cost bestow'd,
 As scarce it could afford to flesh and blood,
 So lik'd the frame, he would not work anew,
 To save the charges of another you.
 Or by his middle science did he steer,
 And saw some great contingent good appear,
 Well worth a miracle to keep you here : }

And for that end, preserv'd the precious mould,
Which all the future Ormonds was to hold ;
And meditated in his better mind
An heir from you, who may redeem the failing kind.

Bless'd be the pow'r which has at once restor'd
The hopes of lost succession to your Lord,
Joy to the first, and last of each degree,
Virtue to courts, and what I long'd to see,
To you the Graces, and the Muse to me.

O daughter of the Rose, whose cheeks unite
The diff'ring titles of the Red and White ;
Who Heav'n's alternate beauty well display,
The blush of morning, and the milky way ;
Whose face is Paradise, but fenc'd from sin :
For God in either eye has plac'd a Cherubin.
All is your Lord's alone ; ev'n absent, he
Employs the care of chaste Penelope.
For him you waste in tears your widow'd hours,
For him your curious needle paints the flow'rs :
Such works of old imperial dames were taught ;
Such for Ascanius fair Elisa wrought.

The soft recesses of your hours improve
The three fair pledges of your happy love :
All other parts of pious duty done,
You owe your Ormond nothing but a son ;
To fill in future times his Father's place,
And wear the garter of his Mother's race.

P A L A M O N

AND

A R C I T E.

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE,

FROM CHAUCER.

IN THREE BOOKS.

B O O K I.

I N days of old, there liv'd, of mighty fame,
A valiant prince; and Theseus was his name :
A chief, who more in feats of arms excell'd
The rising nor the setting sun beheld.
Of Athens he was lord ; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown :
In Scythia with the warrior Queen he strove,
Whom first by force he conquer'd, then by love;
He brought in triumph back the beauteous dame,
With whom her sister, fair Emilia, came.
With honour to his home let Theseus ride,
With love to friend, and fortune for his guide,
And his victorious army at his side. }
I pass their warlike pomp, their proud array,
Their shouts, their songs, their welcome on the way :

But, were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy Queen, and heroe knight ;
The town besieg'd, and how much blood it cost
The female army, and th' Athenian host ;
The spousals of Hippolita the Queen ;
What tilts, and tourneys at the feast were seen ;
The storm at their return, the ladies fear :
But these and other things I must forbear.
The field is spacious I design to sow,
With oxen far unfit to draw the plow :
The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waste my strength ;
And trivial accidents shall be forborn,
That others may have time to take their turn ;
As was at first enjoin'd us by mine host :
That he whose tale is best, and pleases most,
Should win his supper at our common cost.

And therefore where I left, I will pursue
This ancient story, whether false or true,
In hope it may be mended with a new.
The prince I mention'd, full of high renown,
In this array drew near th' Athenian town ;
When in his pomp and utmost of his pride,
Marching, he chanc'd to cast his eye aside,
And saw a quire of mourning dames, who lay
By two and two across the common way :
At his approach they rais'd a rueful cry,
And beat their breasts, and held their hands on high,
Creeping and crying, till they seiz'd at last
His courser's bridle, and his feet embrac'd.

Tell me, said Theseus, what and whence you are,
And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds,
Too meet my triumph in ill-omen'd weeds?
Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
With grief my pleasures, and pollute my joy?
Or are you injur'd, and demand relief?
Name your request, and I will ease your grief.

The most in years of all the mourning train
Began; (but swooned first away for pain)
Then, scarce recover'd, spoke: Nor envy we
Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory;
'Tis thine, O King, th' afflicted to redress,
And fame has fill'd the world with thy success:
We wretched women sue for that alone,
Which of thy goodness is refus'd to none:
Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
If what we beg be just, and we deserve relief:
For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
But held the rank of Sovereign Queen before;
Till, thanks to giddy Chance, which never bears
That mortal bliss should last for length of years,
She cast us headlong from our high estate;
And here in hope of thy return we wait:
And long have waited in the temple nigh,
Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.
But reverence thou the pow'r whose name it bears,
Relieve th' oppress'd, and wipe the widows tears.
I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
The wife of Capaneus, and once a Queen:
At Thebes he fell; curs'd be the fatal day!
And all the rest thou seest in this array,

To make their moan, their lords in battle lost;
Before that town besieg'd by our confed'rate host.
But Creon, old and impious, who commands
The Theban city, and usurps the lands,
Denies the rites of fun'ral fires to those
Whose breathless bodies yet he calls his foes.
Unburn'd, unbury'd, on a heap they lie:
Such is their fate, and such his tyranny;
No friend has leave to bear away the dead,
But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are fed;
At this she shriek'd aloud, the mournful train
Echo'd her grief, and grov'ling on the plain,
With groans, and hands upheld, to move his mind,
Besought his pity to their helpless kind!

The prince was touch'd, his tears began to flow,
And, as his tender heart would break in two,
He sigh'd; and could not but their fate deplore,
So wretched now, so fortunate before.
Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew,
And raising one by one the suppliant crew,
To comfort each, full solemnly he swore,
That by the faith which knights to knighthood bore,
And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
He would not cease, till he reveng'd their wrongs;
That Greece should see perform'd what he declar'd,
And cruel Creon find his just reward.
He said no more, but shunning all delay,
Rode on; nor enter'd Athens on his way;
But left his sister and his Queen behind,
And wav'd his royal banner in the wind;
Where in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron carr;

Red was his sword, and shield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead seem'd to glow with fire;
Ev'n the ground glitter'd where the standard flew,
And the green grass was dy'd to sanguine hue.
High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquer'd Minotaur;
The soldiers shout around with generous rage,
And in that victory, their own presage.
He prais'd their ardour; inly pleas'd to see
His host the flow'r of Grecian chivalry.
All day he march'd; and all th' ensuing night;
And saw the city with returning light.
The process of the war I need not tell,
How Theseus conquer'd, and how Creon fell;
Or after, how by storm the walls were won,
Or how the victor sack'd and burn'd the town;
How to the ladies he restor'd again
The bodies of their lords in battle slain;
And with what ancient rites they were interr'd;
All these to fitter time shall be deferr'd:
I spare the widows tears, their woful cries
And howling at their husbands obsequies;
How Theseus at these fun'rals did assist,
And with what gifts the mourning dames dismiss'd.

Thus when the victor chief had Creon slain,
And conquer'd Thebes, he pitch'd upon the plain
His mighty camp, and when the day return'd,
The country wasted, and the hamlets burn'd;
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without controul to strip and spoil the dead.

There, in a heap of slain, amongst the rest press'd
Two youthful knights they found beneath a load op-

Of slaughter'd foes, whom first to death they sent,
The trophies of their strength, a bloody monument.
Both fair, and both of royal blood they seem'd,
Whom kinsmen to the crown the heralds deem'd;
That day in equal arms they fought for fame;
Their swords, their shields, their surcoats were the same.
Close by each other laid they press'd the ground,
Their manly bosoms pierc'd with many a grievous
wound;

Nor well alive, nor wholly dead they were,
But some faint signs of feeble life appear:
The wand'ring breath was on the wing to part,
Weak was the pulse, and hardly heav'd the heart.
These two were sisters sons; and Arcite one,
Much fam'd in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From these their costly arms the spoilers rent,
And softly both convey'd to Theseus' tent;
Whom known of Creon's line, and cur'd with care,
He to his city sent as pris'ners of the war,
Hopeless of ransom, and condemn'd to lie
In durance, doom'd a ling'ring death to die.

This done, he march'd away with warlike sound,
And to his Athens turn'd with laurels crown'd,
Where happy long he liv'd, much lov'd, and more
renown'd.

But in a tow'r, and never to be loos'd,
The woful captive kinsmen are inclos'd.

Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,
Till once ('twas on the morn of chearful May)
The young Emilia, fairer to be seen
Than the fair lilly on the flow'ry green,

More fresh than May herself in blossoms new
(For with the rosy colour strove her hue)
Wak'd, as her custom was, before the day,
To do th' observance due to sprightly May :
For sprightly May commands our youth to keep
The vigils of her night, and breaks their sluggard sleep :
Each gentle breast with kindly warmth she moves ;
Inspires new flames, revives extinguish'd loves ;
In this remembrance, Emily e'er day
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array ;
Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair :
Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair :
A ribband did the braided tresses bind,
The rest was loose, and wanton'd in the wind :
Aurora had but newly chac'd the night,
And purpl'd o'er the sky with blushing light,
When to the garden-walk she took her way,
To sport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.

At ev'ry turn, she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lilly hand,
To draw the rose, and ev'ry rose she drew,
She shook the stalk, and brush'd away the dew :
Then party-colour'd flow'rs of white and red
She wove, to make a garland for her head :
This done, she sung and caroll'd out so clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear.
Ev'n wond'ring Philomel forgot to sing ;
And learn'd from her to welcome in the spring.
The tow'r, of which before was mention made,
Within whose keep the captive knights were laid,

Built of a large extent, and strong withal,
Was one partition of the palace wall :
The garden was inclos'd within the square
Where young Emilia took the morning air.

It happen'd Palamon, the pris'ner knight,
Restless for wee, arose before the light,
And with his jailor's leave desir'd to breathe
An air more wholesome than the damps beneath.
This granted, to the tow'r he took his way,
Cheer'd with the promise of a glorious day :
Then cast a languishing regard around,
And saw with hateful eyes the temples crown'd
With golden spires, and all the hostile ground.
He sigh'd, and turn'd his eyes, because he knew
'Twas but a larger jail he had in view :

Then look'd below, and from the castle's height
Beheld a nearer, and more pleasing sight :
The garden, which before he had not seen,
In spring's new livery clad of white and green,
Fresh flow'rs in wide parterres, and shady walks be-
tween.

This view'd, but not enjoy'd, with arms across
He stood, reflecting on his country's loss :
Himself an object of the public scorn,
And often wish'd he never had been born.
At last (for so his destiny requir'd)
With walking giddy, and with thinking tir'd,
He through a little window cast his sight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a scanty light :
But e'en that glimmering serv'd him to descry
Th' inevitable charms of Emily.

Scarce had he seen, but, seiz'd with sudden smart,
Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart;
Struck blind with overpowering light he stood,
Then started back amaz'd, and cry'd aloud.

Young Arcite heard; and up he ran with haste,
To help his friend, and in his arms embrac'd;
And ask'd him why he look'd so deadly wan,
And whence, and how his change of cheer began?
Or who had done th' offence? but if, said he,
Your grief alone is hard captivity;
For love of heav'n, with patience undergo
A cureless ill, since Fate will have it so:
So stood our horoscope in chains to lie,
And Saturn in the dungeon of the sky,
Or other baleful aspect, rul'd our birth,
When all the friendly stars were under earth:
Whate'er betides, by destiny 'tis done;
And better bear like men, than vainly seek to shun.
Nor of my bonds, said Palamon again,
Nor of unhappy planets I complain;
But when my mortal anguish caus'd my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either eye;
Pierc'd with a random-shaft, I taint away
And perish with insensible decay:
A glance of some new goddess gave the wound,
Whom, like Acteon, unaware I found.
Look how she walks along yon shady space,
Not Juno moves with more majestic grace;
And all the Cyprian queen is in her face.
If thou art Venus, (for thy charms confess
That face was form'd in heav'n), nor art thou less;

Disguis'd in habit, undisguis'd in shape,
O help us captives from our chains to scape;
But if our doom be pass'd in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathsome dungeon die;
Then be thy wrath appeas'd with our disgrace,
And shew compassion to the Theban race,
Oppress'd by tyrant pow'r! While yet he spoke,
Arcite on Emily had fix'd his look;
The fatal dart a ready passage found,
And deep within his heart infix'd the wound:
So that if Palamon were wounded fore,
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more:
Then from his inmost soul he sigh'd, and said,
The beauty I behold has struck me dead:
Unknowingly she strikes; and kills by chance;
Poison is in her eyes, and death in every glance.
O, I must ask; nor ask alone, but move
Her mind to mercy, or must die for love.

Thus Arcite: And thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his eyes,)
Speak'st thou in earnest, or in jesting vein?
Jesting, said Arcite, suits but ill with pain.
It suits far worse, (said Palamon again,
And bent his brows) with men who honour weigh,
Their faith to break, their friendship to betray;
But worst with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinsman, and in arms my brother sworn.
Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one should be the common good of both?
One soul should both inspire, and neither prove
His fellow's hindrance in pursuit of love?

To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the bands.
This binds thee, then, to further my design:
As I am bound by vow to further thine:

For canst, nor dar'st thou, traitor, on the plain
Approach my honour, or thy own maintain,
Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care depend:
And would'st thou court my lady's love, which I
Much rather than release, would chuse to die?
But thou, false Arcite, never shalt obtain
My bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:

For first my love began e'er thine was born;
Thou, as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound t' assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deem'd a perjur'd knight.

Thus Palamon: But Arcite, with disdain,
In haughty language, thus reply'd again:
Per sworn thyself! the traitor's odious name
First return, and then disprove thy claim.

Love be passion, and that passion nurs'd
With strong desires, I lov'd the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal inflam'd
To worship, and a pow'r celestial nam'd?

Thine was devotion to the blest'd above,
I saw the woman, and desir'd her love;
First own'd my passion, and to thee commend
Th' important secret, as my chosen friend.

I propose (which yet I grant not) thy desire
Moment elder than my rival fire;

Can chance of seeing first thy title prove?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for love?

Law is to things which to free choice relate;
 Love is not in our choice, but in our fate:
 Laws are but positive; love's power, we see,
 Is Nature's sanction, and her first decree.
 Each day we break the bond of human laws
 For love, and vindicate the common cause.
 Laws for defence of civil rights are plac'd, [wa
 Love throws the fences down, and makes a gener
 Maids, widows, wives, without distinction fall;
 The sweeping deluge, love, comes on, and covers a
 If then the laws of friendship I transgress,
 I keep the greater, while I break the less;
 And both are mad alike, since neither can possess.
 Both hopeless to be ransom'd, never more
 To see the sun, but as he passes o'er.

Like Esop's hounds contending for the bone,
 Each pleaded right, and would be lord alone:
 The fruitless fight continu'd all the day;
 A cur came by, and snatch'd the prize away.
 As courtiers therefore juggle for a grant, [wa
 And when they break their friendship, plead the
 So thou, if fortune will thy suit advance,
 Love on; nor envy me my equal chance:
 For I must love, and am resolv'd to try
 My fate, or failing in th' adventure die.

Great was their strife, which hourly was renew'd,
 Till each with mortal hate his rival view'd.
 Now friends no more, nor walking hand in hand;
 But when they met, they made a furlly stand;
 And glar'd like angry lions as they pass'd,
 And wish'd that ev'ry look might be their last.

It chanc'd at length, Perithous came, t' attend
 This worthy Theseus, his familiar friend.
 Their love in early infancy began,
 And rose as childhood ripen'd into man.
 Companions of the war; and lov'd so well,
 That when one dy'd, as ancient stories tell,
 His fellow, to redeem him, went to hell.

}

But to pursue my tale; to welcome home
 His warlike brother is Perithous come.
 Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long since,
 And honour'd by this young Thessalian prince.
 Theseus, to gratify his friend and guest,
 Who made our Arcite's freedom his request,
 Restor'd to liberty the captive knight,
 But on these hard conditions I recite;
 That if hereafter Arcite should be found
 Within the compass of Athenian ground,
 By day or night, or on what'er pretence,
 His head should pay the forfeit of th' offence.
 To this, Perithous for his friend, agreed,
 And on his promise was the pris'ner freed.

Unpleas'd and pensive hence he takes his way,
 At his own peril; for his life must pay.
 Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter fate,
 Finds his dear purchase, and repents too late?
 What have I gain'd, he said, in prison pent,
 If I but change my bonds for banishment?
 And banish'd from her sight, I suffer more
 In freedom, than I felt in bonds before;
 Forc'd from her presence, and condemn'd to live;
 Unwelcom'd freedom, and unthank'd reprieve.

Heav'n is not but where Emily abides,
And where she's absent, all is hell besides.
Next to my day of birth was that accurst,
Which bound my friendship to Perithous first;
Had I not known that prince, I still had been
In bondage, and still Emilia seen;
For though I never can her grace deserve,
'Tis recompence enough to see and serve.
O Palamon, my kinsman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love attend!
Thine is th' adventure; thine the victory;
Well has thy fortune turn'd the dice for thee:
Thou on that angel's face may'st feed thy eyes,
In prison, no; but blissful Paradise!
Thou daily see'st that sun of beauty shine,
And lov'st at least in love's extremest line.
I mourn in absence love's eternal night,
And who can tell but, since thou hast her sight,
And art a comely, young, and valiant knight,
Fortune (a various power) may cease to frown,
And by some ways unknown thy wishes crown.
But I, the most forlorn of human kind,
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find;
But doom'd to drag my loathsome life in care;
For my reward, must end it in despair.
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of fates
That governs all, and heav'n that all creates,
Nor art, nor nature's hand can ease my grief,
Nothing but death, the wretch's last relief:
Then farewell youth, and all the joys that dwell
With youth and life, and life itself farewell.

But why, alas! do mortal men in vain
Of fortune, fate, or providence complain?
God gives us what he knows our wants require,
And better things than those which we desire:
Some pray for riches; riches they obtain;
But watch'd by robbers, for their wealth are slain:
Some pray from prison to be freed; and come,
When guilty of their vows, to fall at home;
Murder'd by those they trusted with their life;
A favour'd servant, or a bosom wife.
Such dear-bought blessings happen ev'ry day,
Because we know not for what things to pray.
Like drunken fots about the streets we roam;
Well knows the fot he has a certain home;
Yet knows not how to find th' uncertain place,
And blunders on, and staggers ev'ry pace.
Thus all seek happiness; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.
This is my case, who thought our utmost good
Was in one word of freedom understood:
The fatal blessing came; from prison free,
Starve abroad, and lose the sight of Emily.
Thus Arcite; but if Arcite thus deplore
His suff'rings, Palamon yet suffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He swells with wrath; he makes outrageous moan:
He frets, he fumes, he stares, he stamps the ground;
The hollow tow'r with clamours rings around:
With briny tears he bath'd his fetter'd feet,
And drop'd all o'er with agony of sweat,
Alas! he cry'd, I wretch in prison pine,
Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine:

Thou liv'st at large, thou draw'st thy native air,
Pleas'd with thy freedom, proud of my despair;
Thou may'st, since thou hast youth and courage join'd,
A sweet behaviour, and a solid mind,
Assemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy disgrace.
And after (by some treaty made) possess
Fair Emily, the pledge of lasting peace.
So thine shall be the beauteous prize, while I
Must languish in despair, in prison die.
Thus all th' advantage of the strife is thine,
Thy portion double joys, and double sorrows mine.

The rage of jealousy then fir'd his soul,
And his face kindl'd like a burning coal:
Now cold Despair, succeeding in her stead,
To livid paleness turns the glowing red.
His blood scarce liquid, creeps within his veins,
Like water, which the freezing wind constrains.
Then thus he said: Eternal deities,
Who rule the world with absolute decrees,
And write whatever time shall bring to pass
With pens of adamant, on plates of brass!
What! is the race of human kind your care
Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are?
He with the rest are liable to pain,
And like the sheep, his brother-beast, is slain.
Cold, hunger, prisons, ills without a cure,
All these he must, and guiltless oft, endure:
Or does your justice, pow'r, or prescience fail,
When the good suffer, and the bad prevail?
What worse to wretched virtue could befall,
If Fate, or giddy Fortune govern'd all?

Nay, worse than other beasts is our estate ;
 Them, to pursue their pleasures you create ;
 We, bound by harder laws, must curb our will,
 And your commands, not our desires fulfil :
 Then when the creature is unjustly slain,
 Yet after death at least he feels no pain :
 But man in life furcharg'd with woe before,
 Not freed when dead, is doom'd to suffer more.
 A serpent shoots his sting at unaware ;
 An ambush'd thief forelays a traveller ;
 The man lies murder'd, while the thief and snake,
 One gains the thickets, and one thrids the brake.
 This let divines decide ; but well I know,
 Just, or unjust, I have my share of woe :
 Through Saturn seated in a luckless place,
 And Juno's wrath, that persecutes my race ;
 Or Mars and Venus in a quartil, move
 My pangs of jealousy for Arcite's love.

Let Palamon oppress'd in bondage mourn,
 While to his exil'd rival we return.
 By this the sun declining from his height,
 The day had shortned to prolong the night :
 The lengthen'd night gave length of misery
 Both to the captive lover, and the free ;
 For Palamon in endless prison mourns,
 And Arcite forfeits life if he returns :
 The banish'd never hopes his love to see,
 Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty.
 'Tis hard to say who suffers greater pains,
 One sees his love, but cannot break his chains :
 One free, and all his motions uncontroul'd,
 Beholds whate'er he wou'd but what he wou'd behold.

Judge as you please, for I will haste to tell
 What fortune to the banish'd knight befel.
 When Arcite was to Thebes return'd again,
 The loss of her he lov'd renew'd his pain;
 What could be worse, than never more to see
 His life, his soul, his charming Emily?
 He rav'd with all the madness of despair,
 He roar'd, he beat his breast, he tore his hair.
 Dry sorrow in his stupid eyes appears,
 For wanting nourishment, he wanted tears:
 His eye-balls in their hollow sockets sink,
 Bereft of sleep; he loaths his meat and drink.
 He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
 As the pale spectre of a murder'd man:
 That pale turns yellow, and his face receives
 The faded hue of sapless boxen leaves:
 In solitary groves he makes his moan,
 Walks early out, and ever is alone.
 Nor mix'd in mirth, in youthful pleasures shares,
 But sighs when songs and instruments he hears:
 His spirits are so low, his voice is drown'd,
 He hears as from afar, or in a swoon,
 Like the deaf murmurs of a distant sound:
 Uncomb'd his locks, and squalid his attire,
 Unlike the trim of love and gay desire:
 But full of useful mopings, which presage
 The loss of reason, and conclude in rage.

This when he had endur'd a year and more,
 Now wholly chang'd from what he was before,
 It happen'd once, that slumbring as he lay,
 He dream'd (his dream began at break of day)

That Hermes o'er his head in air appear'd,
 And with soft words his drooping spirits cheer'd :
 His hat, adorn'd with wings, disclos'd the God,
 And in his hand he bore the sleep-compelling rod :
 Such as he seem'd, when at his Sire's command
 On Argus' head he laid the snaky wand ;
 Arise, he said, to conq'ring Athens go,
 There Fate appoints an end of all thy woe.
 The fright awaken'd Arcite with a start,
 Against his bosom bounc'd his heaving heart ;
 But soon he said, with scarce-recover'd breath,
 And thither will I go, to meet my death,
 Sure to be slain ; but death is my desire,
 Since in Emilia's sight I shall expire.
 By chance he spy'd a mirrour while he spoke,
 And gazing there beheld his alter'd look ;
 Wond'ring, he saw his features and his hue
 So much were chang'd, that scarce himself he knew.
 A sudden thought then starting in his mind,
 Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,
 The world may search in vain with all their eyes,
 But never penetrate through this disguise.
 Thanks to the change which grief and sickness give ;
 In low estate I may securely live,
 And see unknown my mistress day by day.
 He said ; and cloath'd himself in coarse array ;
 A lab'ring hind in shew : Then forth he went,
 And to th' Athenian tow'rs his journey bent :
 One squire attended in the same disguise,
 Made conscious of his master's enterprize.
 Arriv'd at Athens, soon he came to court,
 Unknown, unquestion'd, in that thick resort ;

Proff'ring for hire his service at the gate,
To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait.

So fair befel him, that for little gain
He serv'd at first Emilia's chamberlain;
And watchful all advantages to spy,
Was still at hand, and in his master's eye;
And as his bones were big, and sinews strong,
Refus'd no toil that could to slaves belong;
But from deep wells with engines water drew,
And us'd his noble hands the wood to hew.
He pass'd a year at least attending thus
On Emily, and call'd Philostratus.
But never was there man of his degree
So much esteem'd, so well belov'd as he.
So gentle of condition was he known,
That through the court his courtesy was blown;
All think him worthy of a greater place,
And recommend him to the royal grace;
That exercis'd within a higher sphere,
His virtues more conspicuous might appear.
Thus by the general voice was Arcite prais'd,
And by great Theseus to high favour rais'd;
Among his menial servants first enroll'd,
And largely entertain'd with sums of gold:
Besides what secretly from Thebes was sent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent.
This well employ'd, he purchas'd friends and fame,
But cautiously conceal'd from whence it came.
Thus for three years he liv'd with large increase,
In arms of honour, and esteem in peace;
To Theseus' person he was ever near,
And Theseus for his virtues held him dear.

The End of the First Book.

P A L A M O N

AND

A R C I T E.

O R,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

B O O K II.

WHILE Arcite lives in bliss, the story turns
Where hopeless Palamon in prison mourns.
For six long years immur'd, the captive knight
Had dragg'd his chains, and scarcely seen the light :
Lost liberty, and love at once he bore;
His prison pain'd him much, his passion more :
Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wishes to be free from love.

But when the sixth revolving year was run,
And May within the Twins receiv'd the Sun,
Were it by chance, or forceful destiny,
Which forms in causes first whate'er shall be,
Assisted by a friend one moonless night,
This Palamon from prison took his flight :
A pleasant beverage he prepar'd before
Of wine and honey mix'd, with added store
Of opium ; to his keeper this he brought,
Who swallow'd unaware the sleepy draught,

And snor'd secure till morn, his senses bound
In slumber, and in long oblivion drown'd.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert e'er the rising Sun.
A thick spread forest near the city lay,
To this with lengthen'd strides he took his way,
(For far he could not fly, and fear'd the day :)
Safe from pursuit, he meant to shun the light,
Till the brown shadows of the friendly night
To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
When to his country come, his next design
Was all the Theban race in arms to join,
And war on Theseus, till he lost his life,
Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.
Thus while his thoughts the lingering day beguile,
To gentle Arcite let us turn our style;
Who little dream'd how nigh he was to care,
Till treacherous fortune caught him in the snare.
The morning-lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose with beams so bright,
That all th' horizon laugh'd to see the joyous sight;
He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
And licks the dropping leaves, and dries the dews;
When Arcite left his bed, resolv'd to pay
Observance to the month of merry May:
Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
That scarcely prints the turf on which he trode:
At ease he seem'd, and prancing o'er the plains,
Turn'd only to the grove his horses reins,
The grove I nam'd before; and lighting there,
A woodbind garland sought to crown his hair;

Then turn'd his face against the rising day,
And rais'd his voice to welcome in the May.

For thee, sweet month, the groves green liv'ries wear :
If not the first, the fairest of the year :

For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flow'rs :

When thy short reign is past, the sev'rish sun
The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.

So may thy tender blossoms fear no bite,
Nor goats with venom'd teeth thy tendrils bite,

As thou shalt guide my wand'ring feet to find
The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to bind.

His vows address'd, within the grove he stray'd,
Till Fate, or Fortune, near the place convey'd
His steps where secret Palamon was laid.

Full little thought of him the gentle knight,
Who flying death had there conceal'd his flight,
In brakes and brambles hid, and shunning mortal
sight.

And less he knew him for his hated foe,
But fear'd him as a man he did not know.

But as it has been said of ancient years,
That fields are full of eyes, and woods have ears ;

For this the wise are ever on their guard,
For, unforeseen, they say, is unprepar'd.

Uncautious Arcite thought himself alone,
And less than all suspected Palamon,

Who list'ning heard him, while he search'd the grove,
And loudly sung his roundelay of love.

But on the sudden stopp'd, and silent stood,
(As lovers often muse, and change their mood ;)

Now high as heav'n, and then as low as hell;
Now up, now down, as buckets in a well:
For Venus, like her day, will change her cheer;
And seldom shall we see a Friday clear.
Thus Arcite having sung, with alter'd hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his bosom drew
A desp'rate sigh, accusing Heav'n and Fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate.
Curs'd be the day when first I did appear;
Let it be blotted from the kalendar,
Lest it pollute the month, and poison all the year.
Still will the jealous queen pursue our race?
Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was:
Yet ceases not her hate: For all who come
From Cadmus are involv'd in Cadmus' doom.
I suffer for my blood: Unjust decree!
That punishes another's crime on me.
In mean estate I serve my mortal foe,
The man who caus'd my country's overthrow.
This is not all; for Juno to my shame,
Has forc'd me to forsake my former name;
Arcite I was, Philostratus I am.
That side of heav'n is all my enemy:
Mars ruin'd Thebes; his mother ruin'd me.
Of all the royal race remains but one,
Besides myself, th' unhappy Palamon,
Whom Theseus holds in bonds, and will not free;
Without a crime, except his kin to me.
Yet these, and all the rest I could endure;
But love's a malady without a cure:
Fierce love has pierc'd me with his fiery dart,
He fries within, and hisses at my heart.

Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate pursue;
I suffer for the rest; I die for you.
Of such a goddess no time leaves record,
Who burn'd the temple where she was ador'd:
And let it burn, I never will complain,
Pleas'd with my suff'rings, if you knew my pain.

At this a sickly qualm his heart assail'd,
His ears ring inward, and his senses fail'd.
No word mis'd Palamon of all he spoke,
But soon to deadly pale he chang'd his look:
He trembl'd ev'ry limb, and felt a smart,
As if cold steel had glided through his heart;
Nor longer staid, but starting from his place,
Discover'd stood, and shew'd his hostile face:
False traitor Arcite, traitor to thy blood,
Bound by thy sacred oath to seek my good,
Now art thou found forsworn, for Emily;
And dar'st attempt her love, for whom I die.
So hast thou cheated Theseus with a wife,
Against thy vow returning, to beguile
Under a borrowed name; as false to me,
So false thou art to him who set thee free.
But rest assur'd, that either thou shalt die,
Or else renounce thy claim on Emily;
For though unarm'd I am, (and freed by chance)
Am here without my sword, or pointed lance;
Hope not, base man, unquestion'd hence to go,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe.

Arcite, who heard his tale, and knew the man,
His sword unsheath'd, and fiercely thus began:
Now by the gods, who govern heav'n above,
Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with love,

That word had been thy last, or in this grove
This hand should force thee to renounce thy love.
The surety which I gave thee, I defy;
Fool ! not to know that love endures no tie,
And Jove but laughs at lovers perjury.
Know I will serve the fair in thy despite;
But since thou art my kinsman, and a knight,
Here, have my faith, to-morrow in this grove
Our arms shall plead the titles of our love:
And heav'n so help my right, as I alone [known;
Will come, and keep the cause and quarrel both un-
With arms of proof both for myself and thee;
Chuse thou the best, and leave the worst to me.
And, that at better ease thou may'st abide,
Bedding and clothes I will this night provide,
And needful sustenance, that thou mayst be
A conquest better won, and worthy me.
His promise Palamon accepts; but pray'd,
To keep it better than the first he made.
Thus fair they parted till the morrow's dawn,
For each had laid his plighted faith to pawn.
Oh Love! thou sternly do'st thy pow'r maintain,
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign,
Tyrants and thou all fellowship disdain.
This was in Arcite prov'd, and Palamon,
Both in despair, yet each would love alone.
Arcite return'd, and, as in honour ty'd,
His foe with bedding and with food supply'd;
Then, e'er the day, two suits of armour sought,
Which borne before him on his steed he brought:
Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure,
As might the strokes of two such arms endure.

Now, at the time, and in th' appointed place,
The challenger, and challeng'd, face to face,
Approach ; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred chang'd their hue.
So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear,
Toll in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees ;
And thinks here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight, or I :
This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart ;
A gen'rous chinefs seizes ev'ry part ;
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the heart. }
Thus pale they meet ; their eyes with fury burn ;
None greets ; for none the greeting will return :
Out in dumb surliness, each arm'd with care
His foe profess'd, as brother of the war.
Then both, no moment lost, at once advance
Against each other, arm'd with sword and lance ;
They lash, they foil, they pass, they strive to bore
Their corslets, and the thinnest parts explore.
Thus two long hours in equal arms they stood,
And wounded, wound ; till both were bath'd in blood ;
And not a foot of ground had either got,
As if the world depended on the spot.
Till Arcite like an angry tyger far'd,
And like a lion Palamon appear'd :
Or as two boars whom love to battle draws,
With rising bristles, and with froathy jaws,
Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they wound ;
With grunts and groans the forest rings around.

So fought the knights, and fighting must abide,
Till Fate an umpire sends their difference to decide.
The pow'r that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heaven foresees,
Call'd providence, or chance, or fatal sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds or makes her way,
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united pow'r
One moment can retard th' appointed hour.
And some one day, some wondrous chance appears,
Which happen'd not in centuries of years:
For sure, whate'er we mortals hate or love,
Or hope, or fear, depends on pow'rs above;
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate the will.
In Theseus this appears; whose youthful joy
Was beasts of chase in forests to destroy;
This gentle knight, inspir'd by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds pursu'd his way.
Beside him rode Hippolita the queen,
And Emily attir'd in lively green:
With horns, and hounds, and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh:
And as he follow'd Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the wood
Where the two knights in cruel battle stood:
The lawn on which they fought, th' appointed place
In which th' uncoupl'd hounds began the chase.
Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay;

And thence dislodg'd, was wont to leave the wood,
For open fields, and cross the chrystal flood.
Approach'd, and looking underneath the sun,
He saw the proud Arcite, and fierce Palamon,
In mortal battle doubling blow on blow,
Like lightn'ning flam'd their faulchions to and fro,
And shot a dreadful gleam; so strong they strook,
There seem'd less force requir'd to fell an oak:
He gaz'd with wonder on their equal might,
Look'd eager on, but knew not either knight;
Resolv'd to learn, he spurr'd his fiery steed
With goring rowels, to provoke his speed.
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt 'em on the place;
And with his sword unsheath'd, on pain of life,
Commands both combatants to cease their strife
Then with imperious tone pursues his threat;
What are you? why in arms together met?
How dares your pride presume against my laws,
As in a list'd field to fight your cause?
Unask'd the royal grant; no marshal by,
As knightly rites require; nor judge to try?
Then Palmon, with scarce recover'd breath,
Thus hasty spoke: We both deserve the death,
And both wou'd die; for look the world around,
A pair so wretched is not to be found.
Our life's a load; encumber'd with the charge,
We long to set th' imprison'd soul at large.
Now as thou art a sovereign judge, decree
The rightful doom of death to him and me,
Let neither find thy grace; for grace is cruelty.

}

Me first, O kill me first; and cure my woe:
Then sheath the sword of justice in my foe:
Or kill him first; for when his name is heard,
He foremost will receive his due reward.
Arcite of Thebes is he; thy mortal foe,
On whom thy grace did liberty bestow;
But first contracted, that if ever found,
By day or night, upon th' Athenian ground,
His head should pay the forfeit: See return'd
The perjur'd knight, his oath and honour scorn'd.
For this is he, who with a borrow'd name
And profer'd service, to thy palace came,
Now call'd Philostratus: Retain'd by thee,
A traitor trusted, and in high degree,
Aspiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.
My part remains: From Thebes my birth I own,
And call myself th' unhappy Palamon.
Think me not like that man; since no disgrace
Can force me to renounce the honour of my race.
Know me for what I am: I broke thy chain,
Nor promis'd I thy pris'ner to remain:
The love of liberty with life is giv'n,
And life itself th' inferior gift of Heav'n.
Thus without crime I fled; but farther know,
I with this Arcite am thy mortal foe.
Then give me death, since I thy life pursue;
For safeguard of thyself, death is my due.
More wouldst thou know? I love bright Emily,
And for her sake, and in her sight will die.
But kill my rival too, for he no less
Deserves, and I thy righteous doom will bless,
Assur'd that what I lose, he never shall possess.

to this reply'd the stern Athenian prince,
And fow'rly smil'd, In owning your offence
To judge yourself; and I but keep record
In place of law, while you pronounce the word:
Take your desert, the death you have decree'd;
Seal your doom, and ratify the deed.
Mars, the patron of my arms, you die.
He said; dumb sorrow seiz'd the standers by.
The queen above the rest, by nature good,
(The pattern form'd of perfect womanhood)
For tender pity wept: When she began,
Through the bright quire th' infectious virtue ran.
All drop'd their tears, e'en the contended maid;
And thus among themselves they softly said:
That eyes can suffer this unworthy fight!
Two youths of royal blood, renown'd in fight,
The mastership of heav'n in face and mind,
And lovers, far beyond their faithless kind;
See their wide streaming wounds; they neither came
From pride of empire, nor desire of fame:
Sings fight for kingdoms, madmen for applause;
But love for love alone; that crowns the lover's cause.
This thought, which ever bribes the beauteous kind,
Such pity wrought in ev'ry lady's mind,
They left their steeds, and prostrate on the place,
From the fierce king, implor'd th' offenders grace.
He paus'd a while, stood silent in his mood,
(For yet, his rage was boiling in his blood;)
But soon his tender mind th' impression felt,
As softest metals are not slow to melt,
And pity soonest runs in gentle minds:)
Then reasons with himself; and first he finds,

His passion cast a mist before his sense,
And either made, or magnifi'd th' offence.
Offence! of what? to whom? who judg'd the cause?
The pris'ner freed himself by nature's laws;
Born free, he sought his right: The man he freed
Was perjur'd, but his love excus'd the deed.
Thus pond'ring, he look'd under with his eyes,
And saw the womens tears, and heard their cries;
Which mov'd compassion more: He shook his head,
And softly sighing to himself, he said, [dra

Curse on th' unpard'ning prince, whom tears ca
To no remorse; who rules by lions law;
And deaf to pray'rs, by no submission bow'd,
Rends all alike, the penitent, and proud.
At this, with look serene, he rais'd his head,
Reason resum'd her place, and passion fled.
Then thus aloud he spoke: The pow'r of love,
In earth, and seas, and air, and heav'n above,
Rules, unresisted, with an awful nod;
By daily miracles declar'd a god;
He blinds the wise, gives eye-sight to the blind;
And moulds and stamps anew the lover's mind.
Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in safety gone;
What hinder'd either in their native soil
At ease to reap the harvest of their toil?
But love, their lord, did otherwise ordain,
And brought 'em in their own despite again,
To suffer death deserv'd; for well they know,
'Tis in my pow'r, and I their deadly foe.
The proverb holds, that to be wise and love,
Is hardly granted to the gods above.

See how the madmen bleed ; behold the gains
With which their master, Love, rewards their pains :
For sev'n long years, on duty ev'ry day,
To their obedience, and their monarchs pay !
Yet, as in duty bound, they serve him on,
And ask the fools, they think it wisely done :
Nor ease, nor wealth, nor life itself regard,
For 'tis their maxim, love is love's reward.
This is not all ; the air, for whom they strove,
Nor knew before, nor could suspect their love ;
Nor thought, when she beheld the fight from far,
Her beauty was th' occasion of th' war.
But sure a gen'ral doom on man is past,
And all are fools and lovers, first or last :
This both by others and myself I know ;
For I have serv'd their sovereign long ago ;
Of have been caught within the winding train
Of female snares, and felt the lovers pain,
And learn'd how far the god can human hearts
constrain.

To this remembrance, and the pray'rs of those
Who for th' offending warriors interpose,
I give their forfeit lives ; on this accord,
To do me homage as their sov'reign Lord ;
And as my vassals, to their utmost might,
Assist my person, and assert my right.
This, freely sworn, the knights their grace obtain'd ;
Then thus the king his secret thoughts explain'd :
If wealth, or honour, or a royal race,
Or each, or all, may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well deserve
A princess born ; and such is she you serve :

For Emily is sister to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty known :
But shou'd you combat till you both were dead,
Two lovers cannot share a single bed :
As therefore both are equal in degree,
The lot of both be left to destiny.
Now hear th' award, and happy may it prove
To her, and him who best deserves her love.
Depart from hence in peace, and free as air,
Search the wide world, and where you please repair;
But on the day when this returning sun
'I'o the same point through ev'ry sign has run,
Then each of you his hundred knights shall bring,
In royal lists, to fight before the king;
And then, the knight, whom fate or happy chance
Shall with his friends to victory advance,
And grace his arms so far in equal fight,
From out the bars to force his opposite,
Or kill, or make him recreant on the plain,
The prize of valour and of love shall gain ;
The vanquish'd party shall their claim release,
And the long jars conclude in lasting peace.
The charge be mine t' adorn the chosen ground,
The theatre of war, for champions so renown'd ;
And take the patrons place of either knight,
With eyes impartial to behold the fight;
And Heav'n of me so judge, as I shall judge aright.
If both are satisfy'd with this accord,
Swear by the laws of knighthood on my sword.
Who now but Palamon exults with joy ?
And ravish'd Arcite seems to touch the sky.

The whole assembl'd troop was pleas'd as well,
Extoll'd th' award, and on their knees they fell,
To bless the gracious king. The knights with leave
Departing from the place, his last commands receive ;
On Emily with equal ardour look,
And from her eyes their inspiration took.
From thence to Thebes' old walls pursue their way,
Each to provide his champions for the day.

It might be deem'd on our historian's part,
Or too much negligence, or want of art,
If he forgot the vast magnificence
Of royal Theseus, and his large expence.
He first enclos'd for lists a level ground,
The whole circumference a mile around.
The form was circular; and all without
A trench was sunk, to moat the place about.
Within an amphitheatre appear'd,
Rais'd in degrees ; to sixty paces rear'd :
That when a man was plac'd in one degree,
Height was allow'd for him above to see.

Eastward was built a gate of marble white ;
The like adorn'd the western opposite.
A nobler object than this fabrick was,
Rome never saw, nor of so vast a space ;
For, rich with spoils of many a conquer'd land,
All arts and artits Theseus could command ;
Who sold for hire, or wrought for better fame ;
The master-painters, and the carvers came.
So rose within the compass of the year
An age's work, a glorious theatre.
Then o'er its eastern gate was rais'd above,
A temple, sacred to the queen of love ;

An altar stood below; on either hand
A priest with roses crown'd, who held a myrtle wand.

The dome of Mars was on the gate oppos'd,
And on the north a turret was enclos'd,
Within the wall, of alabaster white,
And crimson coral, for the queen of night,
Who takes in sylvan sports her chaste delight.

Within these oratories might you see
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery:
Where ev'ry figure to the life express'd
The godhead's pow'r to whom it was address'd.
In Venus' temple, on the sides were seen
The broken slumbers of inamour'd men:
Pray'rs that ev'n spoke, and pity seem'd to call,
And issuing sighs that smok'd along the wall.
Complaints, and hot desires, the lover's hell,
And scalding tears, that wore a channel where they fell:
And all around were nuptial bonds, the ties
Of love's assurance, and a train of lies,
That, made in lust, conclude in perjuries.
Beauty, and youth, and wealth, and luxury,
And sprightly hope, and short-enduring joy;
And forceries, to raise th' infernal pow'rs,
And sigils fram'd in planetary hours:
Expencc, and after-thought, and idle care,
And doubts of motely hue, and dark despair:
Suspicious, and fantastical surmise,
And jealousy suffus'd with jaundice in her eyes;
Discolouring all she view'd, in tawny dress'd;
Down-look'd; and with a cuckow on her fist.
Oppos'd to her, on t' other side, advance
The costly feast, the carol, and the dance,

Minstrels, and music, poetry, and play,
 And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
 All these were painted on the wall, and more;
 With acts and monuments of times before:
 And others added by prophetic doom,
 And lovers yet unborn, and loves to come:
 For there, th' Idalian mount, and Citheron,
 The court of Venus, was in colours drawn.
 Before the palace-gate, in careless drefs,
 And loose array, sat portress Idleness:
 There, by the fount, Narcissus pin'd alone;
 There Samson was, with wiser Solomon,
 And all the mighty names by love undone:
 Medea's charms were there, Circean feasts,
 With bowls that turn'd enamour'd youth to beasts.
 Here might be seen, that beauty, wealth, and wit,
 And prowess, to the pow'r of love submit:
 The spreading snare for all mankind is laid;
 And lovers all betray, and are betray'd.
 The goddesses self, some noble hand had wrought;
 Smiling she seem'd, and full of pleasing thought;
 From ocean as she first began to rise,
 And smooth'd the ruff'd seas, and clear'd the skies;
 She trode the brine all bare below the breast,
 And the green waves but ill conceal'd the rest;
 A lute she held, and on her head was seen
 A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green;
 Her turtles fann'd the luxom air above;
 And, by his mother, stood an infant Love:
 With wings unfledg'd; his eyes were banded o'er;
 His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
 Supply'd with arrows bright and keen a deadly store.

X But in the dome of mighty Mars the red,
With diff'rent figures all the sides were spread.
This temple, less in form, with equal grace,
Was imitative of the first in Thrace;
For that cold region was the lov'd abode,
And sov'reign mansion of the warrior god.
The landscape was a forest wide and bare;
Where neither beast nor human kind repair;
The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,
And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.
A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly stubs, instead of trees, are found;
Or woods with knots, and knares, deform'd and old,
Headless the most, and hideous to behold.
A rattling tempest through the branches went,
That strip'd them bare, and one sole way they bent.
Heav'n froze above, severe, the clouds congeal,
And through the crystal vault appear'd the standing
hail.

Such was the face without, a mountain stood
Threat'ning from high, and overlook'd the wood.
Beneath the low'ring brow, and on a bent,
The temple stood of Mars armipotent;
The frame of burnish'd steel, that cast a glare
From far, and seem'd to thaw the freezing air.
A streight, long entry, to the temple led,
Blind with high walls; and horror over head;
Thence issu'd such a blast, and hollow roar,
As threaten'd from the hinge to heave the door.
In through that door, a northern light there shone:
'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.

The gate was adamant, eternal frame! [came,
Which, hew'd by Mars himself, from Indian quarries
The labour of a God; and all along
Tough iron plates were clench'd to make it strong.
A tun about, was ev'ry pillar there;
A polish'd mirrour shone not half so clear.
There saw I how the secret felon wrought,
And treason lab'ring in the traitor's thought;
And midwife Time the ripen'd plot to murder
brought. }

There, the red Anger dar'd the pallid Fear;
Next stood Hypocrisy, with holy lear,
Soft, smiling, and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown:
Th' assassinating wife, the household fiend;
And far the blackest there, the traitor-friend.
On t' other side there stood Destruction bare;
Unpunish'd Rapine, and a waste of war.
Contest, with sharpen'd knives in cloysters drawn,
And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.
Loud menaces were heard, and foul Disgrace,
And bawling Infamy, in language base; [place. }
'Till Sense was lost in sound, and Silence fled the
The slayer of himself yet saw I there,
The gore congeal'd was clotted in his hair:
With eyes half clos'd, and gaping mouth he lay,
And grim, as when he breath'd his sullen soul away.
In midst of all the dome, Misfortune sat,
And gloomy Discontent, and fell Debate;
And Madness laughing in his ireful mood;
And arm'd Complaint, and Theft, and cries of blood.

There was the murder'd corps, in covert laid,
And violent death in thousand shapes display'd :
The city to the soldier's rage resign'd :
Successless wars, and poverty behind :
Ships burnt in fight, or forc'd on rocky shores,
And the rash hunter strangled by the boars ;
The new-born babe by nurses overlaid ;
And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.
Allills of Mars his nature, flame and steel ;
The gasping charioteer, beneath the wheel
Of his own carr ; the ruin'd house that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls :
The whole division that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in steel for gains,
Were there ; the butcher, armourer, and smith,
Who forges sharpen'd faulchions, or the scythe.
The scarlet Conquest on a tow'r was plac'd,
With shouts, and soldiers acclamations grac'd :
A pointed sword hung threat'ning o'er his head,
Sustain'd but by a slender twine of thread.
There saw I Mars his Ides, the Capitol,
The Seer in vain foretelling Caesar's fall ;
The last Triumvirs, and the wars they move,
And Antony, who lost the world for love.
These, and a thousand more, the fane adorn ;
Their fates were painted e'er the men were born.
All copied from the heav'ns, and ruling force
Of the red star, in his revolving course.
The form of Mars high on a chariot stood,
All sheath'd in arms, and gruffly look'd the god ;

Two geomantic figures were display'd
Above his head, a * warrior and a maid,
One when direct, and one when retrograde.
Tir'd with deformities of death, I haste
To the third temple of Diana chaste.
A sylvan scene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the sides, and on the midst a lawn;
The silver Cynthia, with her nymphs around,
Pursu'd the flying deer; the woods with horns resound:
Calisto there stood manifest of shame,
And turn'd a bear, the northern star became:
Her son was next, and by peculiar grace
In the cold circle held the second place;
The stag Acteon in the stream had spy'd
The naked huntress, and, for seeing, dy'd;
His hounds, unknowing of his change, pursue
The chace, and their mistaken master slew.
Pencian Daphne too was there to see,
Apollo's love before, and now his tree;
Th' adjoining fane th' assembl'd Greeks express'd,
And hunting of the Calydonian beast,
Oenides valour, and his envy'd prize;
The fatal pow'r of Atalanta's eyes;
Diana's vengeance on the victor shown,
The murderess mother, and consuming son.
The Volscian Queen extended on the plain;
The treason punish'd, and the traitor slain.
The rest were various huntings, well design'd,
And savage beasts destroy'd, of ev'ry kind.

* *Rubeus et Puella.*

The graceful goddess was array'd in green ;
 About her feet were little beagles seen, [queen.
 That watch'd with upward eyes the motions of their
 Her legs were buskin'd, and the left before,
 In act to shoot, a silver bow she bore,
 And at her back a painted quiver wore.
 She trode a waxing moon, that soon wou'd wane,
 And drinking borrow'd light, be fill'd again ;
 With down-cast eyes, as seeming to survey
 The dark dominions, her alternate sway.
 Before her stood a woman in her throws,
 And call'd Lucina's aid, her burden to disclose.
 All these the painter drew with such command,
 That nature snatch'd the pencil from his hand,
 Asham'd and angry that his art could feign
 And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
 Theseus beheld the fanes of ev'ry god,
 And thought his mighty cost was well bestow'd ;
 So princes now their poets should regard ;
 But few can write, and fewer can reward.

The theatre thus rais'd, the lists enclos'd,
 And all with vast magnificence dispos'd,
 We leave the monarch pleas'd, and haste to bring
 The knights to combat ; and their arms to sing.

9 MR 53
The End of the Second Book.

P A L A M O N

A N D

A R C I T E.

O R,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

B O O K III.

THE day approach'd when Fortune shou'd decide

Th' important enterprize, and give the bride ;

For now, the rivals round the world had fought,

And each his number, well appointed, brought.

The nations far and near, contend in choice,

And send the flow'r of war by public voice ;

That after, or before, were never known

Such chiefs ; as each an army seem'd alone ;

Beside the champions, all of high degree,

Who knighthood lov'd, and deeds of chivalry,

Throng'd to the lists, and envy'd to behold

The names of others, not their own inroll'd.

Nor seems it strange ; for ev'ry noble knight,

Who loves the fair, and is endu'd with might,

In such a quarrel wou'd be proud to fight.

There breathes not scarce a man on British ground,

An isle for love, and arms of old renown'd),

}

But would have sold his life to purchase fame,
To Palamon or Arcite sent his name :
And had the land selected of the best,
Half had come hence, and let the world provide the rest.
A hundred knights with Palamon there came,
Approv'd in fight, and men of mighty name ;
Their arms were sev'ral, as their nations were,
But furnish'd all alike with sword and spear.
Some wore coat-armour, imitating scale ;
And next their skins were stubborn shirts of mail.
Some wore a breast-plate and a light juppon,
Their horses cloath'd with rich caparison :
Some for defence would leathern bucklers use,
Of folded hides ; and others shields of pruce.
One hung a poleax at his saddle-bow,
And one a heavy mace, to stun the foe :
One for his legs and knees provided well,
With jambeaux arm'd, and double plates of steel :
This on his helmet wore a ladies glove,
And that a sleeve embroider'd by his love.

With Palamon, above the rest in place
Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace ;
Black was his beard, and manly was his face.
The balls of his broad eyes roll'd in his head,
And glar'd betwixt a yellow and a red :
He look'd a lion with a gloomy stare, . .
And o'er his eye-brows hung his matted hair :
Big bon'd, and large of limbs, with sinews strong,
Broad shoulder'd, and his arms were round and long.
Four milk white bulls (the Thracian use of old)
Were yok'd to draw his car of burnish'd gold :

Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,
Conspicuous from afar, and over-look'd the field :
His furcoat was a bear-skin on his back ;
His hair hung long behind, and glossy raven-black :
His ample forehead bore a coronet,
With sparkling diamonds, and with rubies set :
Ten brace, and more, of grey-hounds, snowy-fair,
And tall as stags, ran loose, and cours'd around his
chair, [bear ;
A match for pards in flight, in grappling, for the
With golden muzzles all their mouths were bound,
And collars of the same their necks surround.
Thus through the fields Lycurgus took his way ;
His hundred knights attend in pomp and proud array.

To match this monarch, with strong Arcite came
Emetrios king of Inde, a mighty name,
On a bay courser, goodly to behold,
The trappings of his horse emboss'd with barb'rous gold.
Not Mars bestrode a steed with greater grace;
His surcoat o'er his arms was cloth of Thrace,
Adorn'd with pearls, all orient, round, and great;
His saddle was of gold, with Emeralds set.
His shoulders large a mantle did attire,
With rubies thick, and sparkling as the fire:
His amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run,
With graceful negligence; and shone against the sun-
His nose was aquiline, his eyes were blue,
Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue;
Some sprinkled freckles on his face were seen,
Whose dusk set off the whiteness of the skin:
His awful presence did the crowd surprize;
Nor durst the rash spectator meet his eyes,

Eyes that confess'd him born for kingly sway,
So fierce, they flash'd intolerable day.
His age in nature's youthful prime appear'd,
And just began to bloom his yellow beard.
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet, with a silver sound.
A laurel wreath'd his temples, fresh, and green;
And myrtle sprigs, the marks of love, were mix'd be-
tween.

Upon his fist he bore, for his delight,
An eagle well reclaim'd, and lilly white.

His hundred knights attend him to the war,
All arm'd for battle, save their heads were bare.
Words, and devices blaz'd on ev'ry shield;
And pleasing was the terror of the field:
For kings, and dukes, and barons you might see
Like sparkling stars, though diff'rent in degree,
All for th' increase of arms, and love of chivalry. }
Before the king, tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play.
So Bacchus through the conquer'd Indies rode,
And beasts in gambols frisk'd before their honest god.

In this array the war of either side,
Through Athens pass'd with military pride.
At prime, they enter'd on the Sunday morn; [adorn.
Rich tap'stry spread the streets, and flow'rs the pots
The town was all a jubilee of feasts;
So Theseus will'd, in honour of his guests:
Himself with open arms the kings embrac'd,
Then all the rest in their degrees were grac'd.
No harbinger was needful for the night,
For ev'ry house was proud to lodge a knight.

I pass the royal treat, nor must relate
The gifts bestow'd, nor how the champions fate;
Who first, who last, or how the knights address'd
Their vows, or who was fairest at the feast;
Whose voice, whose graceful dance did most surprise,
Soft am'rous sighs, and silent love of eyes.

The rivals call my Muse another way,

To sing their vigils for th' ensuing day.

'Twas ebbing darkness, past the noon of night;

And Phosphor, on the confines of the light,

Promis'd the sun; e'er day began to spring

The tuneful lark already stretch'd her wing,

And flick'ring on her nest, made short essays to sing.

When wakeful Palamon, preventing day,

Took to the royal lists his early way,

To Venus at her fane, in her own house to pray;

There, falling on his knees before her shrine,

He thus implor'd with pray'rs her pow'r divine:

Creator Venus, genial pow'r of love,

The bliss of men below, and gods above,

Beneath the sliding sun thou runn'st thy race,

Dost fairer shine, and best become thy place.

For thee the winds their eastern blasts forbear,

Thy month reveals the spring, and opens all the year.

Thee, goddess, thee, the storms of winter fly;

Earth smiles with flow'rs renewing; laughs the sky;

And birds to lays of love their tuneful notes apply:

For thee the lion loathes the taste of blood,

And roaring hunts his females through the wood:

For thee the bulls rebellow through the groves,

And tempt the stream, and snuff their absent loves.

'Tis thine, whate'er is pleasant, good, or fair;
All nature is thy province, life thy care;
Thou mad'st the world, and dost the world repair.
Thou gladder of the mount of Cytheron,
Increase of Jove, companion of the sun;
If e'er Adonis touch'd thy tender heart,
Have pity, goddess, for thou know'st the smart:
Alas! I have not words to tell my grief;
To vent my sorrow wou'd be some relief:
Light suff'rings give us leisure to complain;
We groan, but cannot speak, in greater pain.
O goddess, tell thyself what I would say,
'Thou know'st it, and I feel too much to pray.
So grant my suit, as I inforce my might,
In love, to be thy champion and thy knight;
A servant to thy sex, a slave to thee,
A foe profess'd to barren chastity.
Nor ask I fame or honour of the field,
Nor chuse I more to vanquish than to yield:
In my divine Emilia make me blest'd;
Let Fate, or partial Chance, dispose the rest:
Find thou the manner, and the means prepare;
Possession, more than conquest, is my care.
Mars is the warrior's god; in him it lies,
On whom he favours, to confer the prize;
With smiling aspect you serenely move
In your fifth orb, and rule the realm of love.
The Fates but only spin the coarser clue,
The finest of the wool is left for you.
Spare me but one small portion of the twine,
And let the Sisters cut below your line:

The rest among the rubbish may they sweep,
Or add it to the yarn of some old miser's heap.
But if you this ambitious pray'r deny,
A wish, I grant, beyond mortality);
Then let me sink beneath proud Arcite's arms,
And I once dead, let him possess her charms.
Thus ended he; then, with observance due,
The sacred incense on her altar threw.
The curling smoke mounts heavy from the fires;
At length it catches flame, and in a blaze expires.
At once the gracious goddess gave the sign,
Her statue shook, and trembl'd all the shrine:
Pleas'd Palamon the tardy omen took:
For, since the flames pursu'd the trailing smoke,
He knew his boon was granted; but the day
No distance driv'n, and joy adjourn'd with long delay.
Now Morn with rosy light had streak'd the sky,
Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily;
Address'd her early steps to Cynthia's fane,
In state attended by her maiden train,
Who bore the vests that holy rites require,
Incense, and od'rous gums, and cover'd fire;
The plenteous horns with pleasant mead they crown;
Nor wanted ought besides in honour of the moon.
Now while the temple smoak'd with hallow'd steam,
They wash the virgin in a living stream.
The secret ceremonies I conceal,
Unconouth, perhaps unlawful to reveal:
But such they were as pagan use requir'd,
Perform'd by women when the men retir'd,
Whose eyes profane, their chaste mysterious rites
Might turn to scandal, or obscene delights.

Well-meaners think no harm ; but for the rest,
Things sacred they pervert, and silence is the best.
Her shining hair, uncomb'd, was loosely spread ;
A crown of mastless oak adorn'd her head ;
When to the shrine approach'd the spotless maid,
Had kindling fires on either altar laid :
(The rites were such as were observ'd of old,
By Statius in his Theban story told ;)
Then kneeling with her hands across her breast,
Thus lowly she preferr'd her chaste request.

O goddess, haunter of the woodland green,
To whom both heav'n and earth and seas are seen ;
Queen of the nether skies, where half the year
Thy silver beams descend, and light the gloomy sphere
Goddess of maids, and conscious of our hearts,
So keep me from the vengeance of thy darts,
Which Niobe's devoted issue felt, [were dealt
When hissing through the skies the feather'd death
As I desire to live a virgin-life,
Nor know the name of mother or of wife.
Thy votress from my tender years I am,
And love, like thee, the woods and sylvan game.
Like death, thou know'st, I loath the nuptial state,
And man, the tyrant of our sex, I hate,
A lowly servant, but a lofty mate :
Where love is duty, on the female side ;
On theirs meer sensual gust, and fought with surly pride
Now by thy triple shape, as thou art seen
In heav'n, earth, hell, and ev'ry where a queen,
Grant this my first desire ; let discord cease,
And make betwixt the rivals lasting peace.

Quench their hot fire, or far from me remove
The flame, and turn it on some other love.
Or if my frowning stars have so decreed,
That one must be rejected, one succeed,
Make him my Lord, within whose faithful breast
Is fix'd my image, and who loves me best.
But, oh! ev'n that avert! I chuse it not,
But take it as the least unhappy lot.
A maid I am, and of thy virgin-train;
Oh, let me still that spotless name retain!
Frequent the forests, thy chaste will obey,
And only make the beasts of chace my prey!

The flames ascend on either altar clear,
While thus the blameless maid address'd her pray'r.
When lo! the burning fire that shone so bright,
Flew off, all sudden, with extinguish'd light,
And left one altar dark, a little space,
Which turn'd self-kindl'd, and-renew'd the blaze:
That other victor-flame a moment stood,
Then fell, and lifeless left th' extinguish'd wood;
For ever lost, th' irrevocable light
Forsook the black'ning coals, and sunk to night:
At either end it whistled as it flew,
And as the brands were green, so drop'd the dew;
Infected as it fell with sweat of sanguin-hue.

The maid from that ill omen turn'd her eyes,
And with loud shrieks and clamours rent the skies,
Nor knew what signify'd the boding sign, [divine.
But found the pow'rs displeas'd, and fear'd the wrath
Then shook the sacred shrine, and sudden light
Sprung through the vaulted roof, and made the temple bright.

The pow'r, behold ! the pow'r in glory shone,
By her bent bow, and her keen arrows known :
The rest, a huntress issuing from the wood,
Reclining on her cornel spear she stood.
Then gracious thus began : Dismiss thy fear,
And heav'n's unchang'd decrees attentive hear :
More pow'rful gods have torn thee from my side,
Unwilling to resign, and doom'd a bride :
The two contending knights are weigh'd above ;
One Mars protects, and one the Queen of love :
But which the man, is in the thund'r's breast,
'This he pronounc'd, 'tis he who loves thee best.
'The fire that, once extinct, reviv'd again,
Foretells the love allotted to remain.
Farewel, she said, and vanish'd from the place ;
The sheaf of arrows shook, and rattl'd in the case.
Agast at this, the royal virgin stood,
Disclaim'd, and now no more a sister of the wood :
But to the parting goddess thus she pray'd ;
Propitious still be present to my aid,
Nor quite abandon your once favour'd maid.
Then sighing she return'd ; but smil'd betwixt,
With hopes, and fears, and joys with sorrows mix'd.
The next returning planetary hour
Of Mars, who shar'd the heptarchy of pow'r,
His steps bold Arcite to the temple bent,
'T' adore with pagan rites the pow'r armipotent :
Then prostrate, low before his altar lay,
And rais'd his manly voice, and thus began to pray.
Strong god of arms ! whose iron scepter sways
The freezing North, and Hyperborean seas,

And Scythian colds, and Thracia's wintry coast,
Where stand thy steeds, and thou art honour'd most :
There most; but ev'ry where thy pow'r is known;
The fortune of the fight is all thy own:
'Terror is thine, and wild amazement flung
From out thy chariot, withers ev'n the strong :
And disarray and shameful rout ensue,
And force is added to the fainting crew.
Acknowledg'd as thou art, accept my pray'r,
If aught I have atchiev'd deserve thy care :
If to my utmost pow'r with sword and shield
I dar'd the death, unknowing how to yield, }
And falling in my rank, still kept the field :
Then let my arms prevail, by thee sustain'd,
That Emily by conquest may be gain'd.
Have pity on my pains; nor those unknown
To Mars, which, when a lover, were his own.
Venus, the public care of all above,
Thy stubborn heart has softned into love :
Now by her blandishments and pow'rful charms,
When yielded, she lay curling in thy arms;
Ev'n by thy shame, if shame it may be call'd,
When Vulcan had thee in his net intrall'd;
O envy'd ignominy, sweet disgrace,
When ev'ry god that saw thee, wish'd thy place!
By those dear pleasures, aid my arms in fight,
And make me conquer in my patron's right :
For I am young, a novice in the trade,
The fool of love, unpractis'd to persuade;
And want the soothing arts that catch the fair,
But caught myself, lie struggling in the snare :

And she I love, or laughs at all my pain, [dain.
Or knows her worth too well; and pays me with dis-
For sure I am, unless I win in arms,
To stand excluded from Emilia's charms :
Nor can my strength avail, unless by thee
Endu'd with force, I gain the victory :
Then for the fire which warm'd thy gen'rous heart,
Pity thy subject's pains, and equal smart.
So be the morrow's sweat and labour mine,
The palm and honour of the conquest thine :
Then shall the war, and stern debate, and strife
Immortal, be the bus'ness of my life ;
And in thy fane, the dusty spoils among,
High on the burnish'd roof, my banner shall be hung ;
Rank'd with my champions bucklers, and below
With arms revers'd, th' achievements of my foe :
And while these limbs the vital spirit feeds,
While day to night, and night to day succeeds,
Thy smoking altar shall be fat with food
Of incense, and the grateful steam of blood ;
Burnt off'rings morn and ev'ning shall be thine ;
And fires eternal in thy temple shine.
This bush of yellow beard, this length of hair,
Which from my birth inviolate I bear,
Guileless of steel, and from the razor free,
Shall fall a plenteous crop, reserv'd for thee.
So may my arms with victory be blest ;
I ask no more ; let Fate dispose the rest.

The champion ceas'd ; there follow'd in the close
A hollow groan, a murm'ring wind arose ;
The rings of ir'n, that on the doors were hung,
Sent out a jarring sound, and harshly rung :

The bolted gates flew open at the blast,
The storm rush'd in; and Arcite stood agast:
The flames were blown aside, yet shone they bright,
Fann'd by the wind, and gave a ruffl'd light:

Then from the ground a scent began to rise,
Sweet-smelling, as accepted sacrifice:
This smen pleas'd, and as the flames aspire
With od'rous incense Arcite heaps the fire;
Nor wanted hymns to Mars, or heathen charms;
At length the nodding statue clash'd his arms,
And with a fullen sound, and feeble cry,
Half sunk, and half pronounc'd the word of victory.
For this, with soul devout, he thank'd the god,
And of success secure, return'd to his abode.

These vows thus granted rais'd a strife above,
Betwixt the God of War and Queen of Love.
She granting first, had right of time to plead;
But he had granted too, nor would recede.
Jove was for Venus; but he fear'd his wife,
And seem'd unwilling to decide the strife;
Till Saturn from his leaden throne arose,
And found a way the diff'rence to compose:
Though sparing of his grace, to mischief bent,
He seldom does a good with good intent:
Wayward, but wise; by long experience taught
To please both parties, for ill ends, he fought;
For this advantage age from youth has won,
As not to be outridden, though outrun.
By fortune he was now to Venus trin'd,
And with stern Mars in Capricorn was join'd;
Of him disposing in his own abode,
He sooth'd the goddess, while he gull'd the god:

Cease, daughter, to complain; and stint the strife;
Thy Palamon shall have his promis'd wife:
And Mars, the lord of conquest, in the fight
With palm and laurel shall adorn his knight.
Wide is my course, nor turn I to my place
Till length of time, and move with tardy pace.
Man feels me, when I press th' etherial plains,
My hand is heavy, and the wound remains.
Mine is the shipwreck, in a war'ry sign;
And in an earthy, the dark dungeon mine.
Cold shivering agues, melancholy care,
And bitter blasting winds, and poison'd air,
Are mine, and wilful death, resulting from despair. }
The throttling quinsy 'tis my star appoints,
And rheumatisms I send to rack the joints:
When churls rebel against their native prince,
I arm their hands, and furnish the pretence;
And housing in the lion's hateful sign,
Bought senates, and deserting troops are mine.
Mine is the privy pois'ning; I command
Unkindly seasons, and ungrateful land.
By me kings palaces are push'd to ground,
And miners, crush'd beneath their mines, are found.
'Twas I slew Samson, when the pillar'd hall
Fell down, and crush'd the many with the fall.
My looking is the fire of pestilence,
That sweeps at once the people and the prince.
Now weep no more, but trust thy grandfire's art;
Mars shall be pleas'd, and thou perform thy part.
'Tis ill, though different your complexions are,
The family of heav'n for men should war.

Th' expedient pleas'd, where neither lost his right :
Mars had the day, and Venus had the night.
The management they left to Chrono's care;
Now turn we to th' effect, and sing the war.

In Athens, all was pleasure, mirth, and play,
All proper to the Spring and sprightly May :
Which ev'ry soul inspir'd with such delight,
'Twas justing all the day, and love at night.
Heav'n smil'd, and gladdened was the heart of man;
And Venus had the world, as when it first began.
At length in sleep their bodies they compose,
And dream'd the future fight, and early rose.

Now scarce the dawning day began to spring,
As at a signal giv'n, the streets with clamours ring :
At once the crowd arose; confus'd and high
Ev'n from the heav'n was heard a shouting cry ;
For Mars was early up, and rous'd the sky. }
The gods came downward to behold the wars,
Sharp'ning their sights, and leaning from their stars.
The neighing of the gen'rous horse was heard,
For battle by the busy groom prepar'd :
Rustling of harness, ratling of the shield,
Clatt'ring of armour, furbish'd for the field.
Crowds to the castle mounted up the street,
Batt'ring the pavement with their coursers feet :
The greedy fight might there devour the gold
Of glitt'ring arms, too dazling to behold ;
And polish'd steel that cast the view aside,
And crested morions, with their plummy pride.
Knights, with a long retinue of their squires,
In gaudy liv'rie's march, and quaint attires.

One lac'd the helm, another held the lance :
A third the shining buckler did advance.

The courser paw'd the ground with restless feet,
And snorting foam'd, and champ'd the golden bit,
The smiths and armourers on palfreys ride,
Files in their hands, and hammers at their side,
And nails for loosen'd spears, and thongs for shields
provide.

The yeomen guard the streets in seemly bands;
And clowns come crowding on, with cudgels in their
hands.

The trumpets, next the gate, in order plac'd,
Attend the sign to sound the martial blast :
The palace-yard is fill'd with floating tides,
And the last comers bear the former to the sides.
The throng is in the midst; the common crew
Shut out, the hall admits the better few.
In knots they stand, or in a rank they walk,
Serious in aspect, earnest in their talk :
Factionous, and fav'ring this or t'other side,
As their strong fancies and weak reason guide :
Their wagers back their wishes; numbers hold
With the fair freckl'd king and beard of gold :
So vig'rous are his eyes, such rays they cast,
So prominent his eagle's beak is plac'd.
But most their looks on the black monarch bend,
His rising muscles, and his brawn commend ;
His double-biting ax, and beamy spear,
Each asking a gigantic force to rear.
All spoke as partial favour mov'd the mind ;
And, safe themselves, at others cost divin'd.

Wak'd by the cries, th' Athenian chief arose,
The knightly forms of combat to dispose;
And passing through th' obsequious guards, he sat
Conspicuous on a throne, sublime in state;
There, for the two contending knights he sent:
Arm'd cap-a-pee, with rev'rence low they bent;
He smil'd on both, and with superior look
Alike their offer'd adoration took.
The people press on ev'ry side to see
Their awful prince, and hear his high decree.
Then signing to the heralds with his hand,
They gave his orders from their lofty stand.
Silence is thrice enjoin'd; then thus aloud [crowd.
The king at arms bespeaks the knights and list'ning
Our sovereign lord has ponder'd in his mind
The means to spare the blood of gentle kind;
And of his grace, and inborn clemency,
He modifies his first severe decree;
The keener edge of battle to rebate,
The troops for honour fighting, not for hate.
He wills not death shou'd terminate their strife;
And wounds, if wounds ensue, be short of life.
But issues, ere the fight, his dread command,
That flings afar, and ponyards hand to hand,
Be banish'd from the field; that none shall dare
With shortned sword to stab in closer war;
But in fair combat fight with manly strength,
Nor push with biting point, but strike at length.
The tourney is allow'd but one career,
Of the tough ash, with the sharp-grinded spear.
But knights unhors'd may rise from off the plain,
And fight on foot, their honour to regain.

Nor, if at mischief taken, on the ground
Be slain, but pris'ners to the pillar bound,
At either barrier plac'd; nor (captives made,)
Be freed, or arm'd anew the fight invade.
The chief of either side, bereft of life,
Or yielded to his foe, concludes the strife.
Thus dooms the lord: Now valiant knights and young
Fight each his fill with swords and maces long.
The herald ends; the vaulted firmament
With loud acclaims, and vast applause is rent:
Heav'n guard a prince so gracious and so good,
So just, and yet so provident of blood!
This was the gen'ral cry. The trumpets found,
And warlike symphony is heard around.
The marching troops through Athens take their way,
The great Earl-Marshall orders their array.
The fair from high the passing pomp behold;
A rain of flow'rs is from the windows roll'd.
The casements are with golden tissue spread,
And horses hoofs, for earth, on silken tap'stry tread.
The king goes midmost, and the rivals ride
In equal rank, and close his either side.
Next after these, there rode the royal wife,
With Emily, the cause, and the reward of strife.
The following cavalcade by three and three,
Proceed by titles marshall'd in degree.
Thus through the southern gate they take their way,
And at the lists arriv'd e'er prime of day.
There, parting from the king, the chiefs divide,
And wheeling east and west, before their many ride.
Th' Athenian monarch mounts his throne on high,
And after him the queen and Emily.

Next these, the kindred of the crown are grac'd
With nearer seats, and lords by ladies plac'd,
Scarce were they seated, when with clamours loud,
In rush'd at once a rude promiscuous crowd:
The guards, and then each other overbare,
And in a moment throng the spacious theatre.
Now chang'd the jarring noise to whispers low,
As winds forsaking seas more softly blow;
When at the western gate, on which the car
Is plac'd aloft, that bears the God of War,
Proud Arcite ent'ring arm'd before his train,
Stops at the barrier, and divides the plain.
Red was his banner, and display'd abroad,
The bloody colours of his patron god.

At that self-moment enters Palamon,
The gate of Venus, and the rising Sun;
Wav'd by the wanton winds, his banner flies,
All maiden white, and shares the peoples eyes.
From east to west, look all the world around,
Two troops so match'd were never to be found:
Such bodies built for strength, of equal age,
In stature fix'd; so proud an equipage.
The nicest eye cou'd no distinction make,
Where lay th' advantage, or what side to take.
Thus rang'd, the herald for the last proclaims
A silence, while they answer'd to their names:
For so the king decreed, to shun with care
The fraud of musters false, the common bane of war.
The tale was just, and then the gates were clos'd;
And chief to chief, and troop to troop oppos'd.
The heralds last retir'd, and loudly cry'd,
The fortune of the field be fairly try'd.

At this, the challenger with fierce defy
His trumpet sounds; the challeng'd makes reply:
With clangor rings the field, resounds the vaulted
sky.

Their vizors clos'd, their lances in the rest,
Or at the helmet pointed, or the crest;
They vanish from the barrier, speed the race,
And spurring see decrease the middle space.
A cloud of smoke envelops either host,
And all at once the combatants are lost:
Darkling they join adverse, and shock unseen,
Courser with courser jostling, men with men;
As lab'ring in eclipse, a while they stay,
Till the next blast of wind restores the day.
They look anew; the beauteous form of fight
Is chang'd, and war appears, a grisly fight.
Two troops in fair array one moment show'd,
The next, a field with fallen bodies strow'd;
Not half the number in their seats are found,
But men and steeds lie grov'ling on the ground.
The points of spears are stuck within the shield,
The steeds without their riders scour the field.
The knights unhors'd, on foot renew the fight;
The glitt'ring faulchions cast a gleaming light;
Hauberks and helms are hew'd with many a wound;
Out spins the streaming blood, and dies the ground.
The mighty maces with such haste descend,
They break the bones, and make the solid armour bend
This thrusts amid the throng with furious force;
Down goes, at once, the horseman and the horse.
That courser stumbles on the fallen steed,
And found'ring, throws the rider o'er his head.

One rolls along, a foot-ball to his foes ;
One with a broken truncheon deals his blows.
This halting, this disabl'd with his wound,
In triumph led, is to the pillar bound,
Where by the king's award he must abide :
There goes a captive led on t' other side.
By fits they cease ; and leaning on the lance,
Take breath a while, and to new fight advance.

Full oft the rivals met, and neither spar'd
His utmost force, and each forgot to ward.
The head of this was to the saddle bent,
That other backward to the crupper sent :
Both were by turns unhors'd ; the jealous blows
Fall thick and heavy, when on foot they close.
So deep their faulchions bite, that ev'ry stroke [took.
Pierc'd to the quick ; and equal wounds they gave and
Born far asunder by the tides of men,
Like adamant and steel they meet again.

So when a tyger sucks the bullock's blood,
A famish'd lion, issuing from the wood,
Roars lordly fierce, and challenges the food. }
Each claims possession, neither will obey,
But both their paws are fasten'd on the prey :
They bite, they tear ; and while in vain they strive,
The swains come arm'd between, and both to distance
drive.

At length, as fate foredoom'd, and all things tend
By course of time to their appointed end ;
So when the sun to west was far declin'd,
And both afresh in mortal battle join'd,
The strong Emetrius came in Arcite's aid,
And Palamon with odds was overlaid ;

For turning short, he struck with all his might
Full on the helmet of th' unwary knight.
Deep was the wound ; he stagger'd with the blow,
And turn'd him to his unexpected foe ;
Whom with such force he struck, he fell'd him down,
And cleft the circle of his golden crown.
But Arcite's men, who now prevail'd in fight,
Twice ten at once surround the single knight :
O'erpow'r'd at length, they force him to the ground,
Unyielded as he was, and to the pillar bound ;
And king Lycurgus, while he fought in vain
His friend to free, was tumbl'd on the plain.

Who now laments but Palamon, compell'd
No more to try the fortune of the field !
And worse than death, to view with hateful eyes
His rival's conquest, and renounce the prize !

The royal judge on his tribunal plac'd,
Who had beheld the fight from first to last,
Bad cease the war ; pronouncing from on high
Arcite of Thebes had won the beauteous Emily.
The sound of trumpets to the voice reply'd,
And round the royal lifts the heralds cry'd,
Arcite of Thebes has won the beauteous bride.

The people rend the skies with vast applause ;
All own the chief, when fortune owns the cause.
Arcite is own'd ev'n by the gods above,
And conqu'ring Mars insults the Queen of love.
So laugh'd he, when the rightful Titan fail'd,
And Jove's usurping arms in heav'n prevail'd.
Laugh'd all the pow'rs who favour tyranny ;
And all the standing army of the sky.

But Venus with dejected eyes appears,
And weeping, on the lists distill'd her tears;
Her will refus'd, which grieves a woman most,
And in her champion foil'd, the cause of love is lost.
Till Saturn said, Fair daughter, now be still,
The blust'ring fool has satisfy'd his will:
His boon is giv'n; his knight has gain'd the day,
But lost the prize; th' arrears are yet to pay.
Thy hour is come, and mine the care shall be
To please thy knight, and set thy promise free.
Now while the heralds run the lists around,
And Arcite, Arcite, heav'n and earth resound;
A miracle (nor less it could be call'd)
Their joy with unexpected sorrow pall'd.
The victor knight had laid his helm aside,
Part for his ease, the greater part for pride:
Bare headed, popularly low he bow'd,
And paid the salutations of the crowd.
Then spurring at full speed, ran endlong on
Where Theseus sat on his imperial throne;
Furious he drove, and upward cast his eye,
Where next the queen was plac'd his Emily;
Then passing, to the saddle-bow he bent,
A sweet regard the gracious virgin lent:
For women, to the brave an easy prey,
Still follow fortune, where she leads the way :)
Just then, from earth sprung out a flashing fire,
By Pluto sent, at Saturn's bad desire;
The startling steed was seiz'd with sudden fright,
And, bounding, o'er the pommel cast the knight;
Forward he flew, and pitching on his head,
He quiver'd with his feet, and lay for dead.

Black was his count'nance in a little space,
For all the blood was gather'd in his face.
Help was at hand ; they rear'd him from the ground,
And from his cumbrous arms his limbs unbound :
Then lanc'd a vein, and watch'd returning breath ;
It came, but clogg'd with symptoms of his death.
The saddle-bow the noble parts had press'd,
All bruise'd and mortify'd his manly breast.
Him still entranc'd, and in a litter laid,
They bore from field, and to his bed convey'd.
At length he wak'd, and with a feeble cry,
The word he first pronounc'd was Emily.

Mean time the king, though inwardly he mourn'd,
In pomp triumphant to the town return'd,
Attended by the chiefs, who fought the field ;
(Now friendly mix'd, and in one troop compell'd ;)
Compos'd his looks to counterfeited cheer,
And bade them not for Arcite's life to fear.
But that which gladdened all the warrior train,
Though most were sorely wounded, none were slain.
The surgeons soon despoil'd 'em of their arms,
And some with salves they cure, and some with charms ;
Foment the bruises, and the pains assuage, [sage,
And heal their inward hurts with sov'reign draughts of
The king in person visits all around,
Comforts the sick, congratulates the sound ;
Honours the princely chiefs, rewards the rest,
And holds for thrice three days a royal feast.
None was disgrac'd ; for falling is no shame ;
And cowardice alone is loss of fame.
The vent'rous knight is from the saddle thrown ;
But 'tis the fault of fortune, not his own.

If crowns and palms the conqu'ring side adorn,
The victor under better stars was born :
The brave man seeks not popular applause,
Nor overpow'r'd with arms, deserts his cause;
Unsham'd, tho' foil'd, he does the best he can;
Force is of brutes, but honour is of man.

Thus Theseus smil'd on all with equal grace ;
And each was set according to his place.
With ease were reconcil'd the diff'ring parts,
For envy never dwells in noble hearts.
At length they took their leave, the time expir'd ;
Well pleas'd, and to their sev'ral homes retir'd.

Mean while the health of Arcite still impairs :
From bad proceeds to worse, and mocks the leeches-
cures :

Swoln is his breast, his inward pains increase,
All means are us'd, and all without success.
The clotted blood lies heavy on his heart,
Corrupts, and there remains in spite of art :
Nor breathing veins, nor cupping will prevail ;
All outward remedies and inward fail :
The mold of Nature's fabric is destroy'd,
Her vessels discompos'd, her virtue void ;
The bellows of his lungs begins to swell ;
All out of frame is ev'ry secret cell,
Nor can the good receive, nor bad expel.
Those breathing organs thus within oppress,
With venom soon distend the sinews of his breast.
Nought profits him to save abandon'd life,
Nor vomits upward aid, nor downward laxative.
The midmost region batter'd, and destroy'd,
When Nature cannot work, th' effect of art is void.

For physic can but mend our crazy state,
Patch an old building, not a new create.
Arcite is doom'd to die in all his pride,
Must leave his youth, and yield his beauteous bride,
Gain'd hardly, against right, and unenjoy'd. }
When 'twas declar'd, all hope of life was past, }
Conscience, that of all physic works the last, }
Caus'd him to send for Emily in haste. }
With her, at his desire, came Palamon ;
Then on his pillow rais'd, he thus begun.
No language can express the smallest part
Of what I feel, and suffer in my heart,
For you, whom best I love and value most ;
But to your service I bequeath my ghost ;
Which from this mortal body when unty'd,
Unseen, unheard, shall hover at your side ;
Nor fright you waking, nor your sleep offend,
But wait officious, and your steps attend :
How I have lov'd, excuse my faultring tongue,
My spirits feeble, and my pains are strong :
This I may say, I only grieve to die,
Because I lose my charming Emily :
To die, when heav'n had put you in my pow'r,
Fate could not chuse a more malicious hour !
What greater curse cou'd envious Fortune give,
Than just to die when I began to live !
Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,
Now warm in love, now with'ring in the grave !
Never, O never more to see the sun !
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone !
This fate is common ; but I lose my breath
Near bliss, and yet not blest'd before my death.

Farewel; but take me dying in your arms,
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms:
This hand I cannot but in death resign;
Ah, could I live! but while I live 'tis mine.
I feel my end approach, and thus embrac'd,
Am pleas'd to die; but hear me speak my last.
Ah! my sweet foe, for you, and you alone,
I broke my faith with injur'd Palamon.
But love the sense of right and wrong confounds,
Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.
And much I doubt, should Heav'n my life prolong,
I shou'd return to justify my wrong:
For while my former flames remain within,
Repentance is but want of pow'r to sin.
With mortal hatred I pursu'd his life,
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife!
Nor I, but as I lov'd: Yet all combin'd,
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind,
And his concurrent flame, that blew my fire;
For still our kindred souls had one desire.
He had a moment's right, in point of time,
Had I seen first, then his had been the crime.
Fate made it mine, and justify'd his right;
Nor holds this earth a more deserving knight,
For virtue, valour, and for noble blood,
Truth, honour, all that is compris'd in good;
So help me heav'n, in all the world is none
So worthy to be lov'd as Palamon.
He loves you too, with such a holy fire,
As will not, cannot, but with life expire:
Our vow'd affections both have often try'd,
Nor any love but yours cou'd ours divide.

Then by my love's inviolable band,
By my long suff'ring, and my short command,
If e'er you plight your vows when I am gone,
Have pity on the faithful Palamon.

This was his last; for death came on amain,
And exercis'd below his iron reign;
Then upward to the seat of life he goes;
Sense fled before him, what he touch'd he froze:
Yet cou'd he not his closing eyes withdraw,
Though less and less of Emily he saw:
So, speechless, for a little space he lay; [way.
Then grasp'd the hand he held, and sigh'd his soul a-

But whither went his soul, let such relate
Who search the secrets of the future state:
Divines can say but what themselves believe;
Strong proofs they have, but not demonstrative.
For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,
And faith itself be lost in certainty.
To live uprightly then is sure the best,
To save ourselves, and not to damn the rest.
The soul of Arcite went, where heathens go;
Who better live than we, though less they know.

In Palamon a manly grief appears;
Silent, he wept, asham'd to shew his tears.
Emilia shriek'd but once, and then oppress'd
With sorrow, sunk upon her lover's breast.
Till Theseus in his arms convey'd with care,
Far from so sad a sight, the swooning fair.
'Twere loss of time her sorrow to relate;
Ill bears the sex a youthful lover's fate,
When just approaching to the nuptial state:

But like a low-hung cloud it rains so fast,
That all at once it falls, and cannot last.
The face of things is chang'd, and Athens now,
That laugh'd so late, becomes the scene of woe :
Matrons and maids, both sexes, ev'ry state,
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.
Not greater grief in falling Troy was seen
For Hector's death ; but Hector was not then.
Old men with dust deform'd their hoary hair,
The women beat their breasts, their cheeks they tear.
Why would'st thou go, with one consent they cry,
When thou had'st gold enough, and Emily ?

Theseus himself, who shou'd have cheer'd the grief
Of others, wanted now the same relief.
Old Egeus only could revive his son,
Who various changes of the world had known ;
And strange vicissitudes of human fate,
Still alt'ring, never in a steady state ;
Good after ill, and after pain delight ;
Alternate, like the scenes of day and night :
Since ev'ry man who lives, is born to die,
And none can boast sincere felicity ;
With equal mind, what happens, let us bear, [care.
Nor joy, nor grieve too much for things beyond our
Like pilgrims, to th' appointed place we tend ;
The world's an inn, and death's the journey's end.
Ev'n kings but play ; and when their part is done,
Some other, worse or better, mount the throne.
With words like these the crowd was satisfy'd,
And so they would have been, had Theseus dy'd.

But he, their king, was lab'ring in his mind
A fitting place for funeral pomps to find,
Which were in honour of the dead design'd.
And after long debate, at last he found
(As love itself had mark'd the spot of ground)
That grove for ever green, that conscious lawn,
Where he with Palamon fought hand to hand :
That where he fed his amorous desires
With soft complaints, and felt his hottest fires ;
There other flames might waste his earthly part,
And burn his limbs, where love had burn'd his heart.

This once resolv'd, the peasants were enjoin'd
Sere-wood, and fires, and dodder'd oaks to find.
With sounding axes to the grove they go,
Fell, split, and lay the fuel on a row,
Vulcanian food : A bier is next prepar'd,
On which the lifeless body should be rear'd,
Cover'd with cloth of gold, on which was laid
'The corpse of Arcite, in like robes array'd.
White gloves were on his hands, and on his head
A wreath of laurel, mix'd with myrtle, spread.
A sword keen-edg'd within his right he held,
The warlike emblem of the conquer'd field.
Bare was his manly visage on the bier ;
Menac'd his count'nance; ev'n in death severe.
Then to the palace-hall they bore the knight,
To lie in solemn state, a public sight.
Groans, cries, and howlings fill the crowded place,
And unaffected sorrow sat on ev'ry face.
Sad Palamon above the rest appears,
In sable garments, dew'd with gushing tears :

His aubourn locks on either shoulder flow'd,
Which to the fun'ral of his friend he vow'd:
But Emily, as chief, was next his side,
A virgin-widow, and a mourning bride.
And that the princely obsequies might be
Perform'd according to his high degree,
The steed that bore him living to the fight,
Was trapp'd with polish'd steel, all shining bright,
And cover'd with th' atchievements of the knight.
The riders rode abreast, and one his shield,
His lance of cornel-wood another held;
The third his bow, and, glorious to behold,
The costly quiver, all of burnish'd gold.
The noblest of the Grecians next appear,
And weeping, on their shoulders bore the bier;
With sober pace they march'd, and often stay'd,
And through the master-street the corpse convey'd.
The houses to their tops with black were spread,
And ev'n the pavements were with mourning hid.
The right side of the pall old Egeus kept,
And on the left the royal Theseus wept:
Each bore a golden bowl of work divine,
With honey fill'd, and milk, and mix'd with ruddy wine.
Then Palamon the kinsman of the slain,
And after him appear'd th' illustrious train:
To grace the pomp came Emily the bright,
With cover'd fire the fun'ral pile to light.
With high devotion was the service made,
And all the rites of pagan honour paid:
So lofty was the pile, a Parthian bow,
With vigour drawn, must send the shaft below.

The bottom was full twenty fathom broad,
With crackling straw beneath in due proportion strow'd.
The fabric seem'd a wood of rising green,
With sulphur and bitumen cast between,
To feed the flames; the trees were unctuous fir,
And mountain-ash, the mother of the spear;
The mourner eugh, and builder oak were there:
The beech, the swimming alder, and the plane,
Hard box, and linden of a softer grain, [dain.
And laurels which the gods for conqu'ring chiefs or-
How they were rank'd shall rest untold by me,
With nameless nymphs that liv'd in ev'ry tree;
Nor how the Dryads, and the woodland train,
Disherited, ran howling o'er the plain:
Nor how the birds to foreign seats repair'd,
Or beasts, that bolted out, and saw the forest bar'd:
Nor how the ground, now clear'd, with ghastly fright,
Beheld the sudden sun, a stranger to the light.

The straw, as first I said, was laid below;
Of chips and sere-wood was the second row;
The third of greens, and timber newly fell'd;
The fourth high stage the fragrant odours held,
And pearls, and precious stones, and rich array;
In midst of which, embalm'd, the body lay.
The service sung, the maid with mourning eyes
The stubble fir'd; the smouldring flames arise:
This office done, she sunk upon the ground;
But what she spoke, recover'd from her swoond,
I want the wit in moving words to dress;
But by themselves the tender sex may guess.
While the devouring fire was burning fast,
Rich jewels in the flame the wealthy cast;

And some their shields, and some their lances threw,
And gave the warrior's ghost a warrior's due.
Full bowls of wine, of honey, milk, and blood,
Were pour'd upon the pile of burning wood,
And hissing flames receive, and hungry lick the food. }
Then thrice the mounted squadrons ride around
The fire, and Arcite's name they thrice resound :
Hail, and farewell, they shouted thrice amain,
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again :
Still as they turn'd, they beat their clatt'ring shields ;
The women mix their cries ; and clamour fills the
fields.

The warlike wakes continu'd all the night,
And fun'ral games were plaid at new returning light :
Who naked wrestl'd best, besmear'd with oil,
Or who with gauntlets gave or took the foil,
I will not tell you, nor wou'd you attend ;
But briefly haste to my long story's end.

I pass the rest ; the year was fully mourn'd,
And Palamon long since to Thebes return'd ;
When, by the Grecians general consent,
At Athens Theseus held his parliament :
Among the laws that pass'd, it was decreed,
That conquer'd Thebes from bondage shou'd be freed ;
Reserving homage to th' Athenian throne,
To which the sovereign summon'd Palamon.
Unknowing of the cause, he took his way,
Mournful in mind, and still in black array. [high,

The monarch mounts the throne, and plac'd on
Commands into the court the beauteous Emily :
So call'd, she came ; the senate rose, and paid
Becoming rev'rence to the royal maid.

And first soft whispers through th' assembly went ;
With silent wonder then they watch'd th' event :
All hush'd, the king arose with awful grace,
Deep thought was in his breast, and counsel in his face.
At length he sigh'd ; and having first prepar'd
Th' attentive audience, thus his will declar'd.

The cause and spring of motion, from above
Hung down on earth the golden chain of love :
Great was th' effect, and high was his intent,
When peace among the jarring feeds he sent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air by this were bound,
And love, the common link, the new creation crown'd.
The chain still holds ; for though the forms decay,
Eternal matter never wears away :
The same First-mover certain bounds has plac'd,
How long those perishable forms shall last ;
Nor can they last beyond the time assign'd
By that all-seeing and all-making Mind :
Shorten their hours they may ; for will is free ;
But never pass th' appointed destiny.
So men oppress'd, when weary of their breath,
Throw off the burden, and stubborn their death.
Then since those forms begin, and have their end,
On some unalter'd cause they sure depend.
Parts of the whole are we ; but God the whole ;
Who gives us life, and animating soul.
For Nature cannot from a part derive
That being, which the whole can only give :
He perfect, stable ; but imperfect we,
Subject to change, and diff'rent in degree.
Plants, beasts, and man ; and as our organs are,
We more or less of his perfection share.

But by a long descent, th' etherial fire
Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire;
As he withdraws his virtue, so they pass,
And the same matter makes another mass:
This law th' omniscient pow'r was pleas'd to give,
That ev'ry kind should by succession live,
That individuals die, his will ordains;
The propagated species still remains.
The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays,
Supreme in state; and in three more decays.
So wears the paving pebble in the street,
And towns and tow'rs their fatal periods meet.
So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie,
Forfaken of their springs, and leave their channels dry.
So man, at first a drop, dilates with heat,
Then form'd, the little heart begins to beat;
Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the shell,
And struggles into breath, and cries for aid;
Then, helpless, in his mother's lap is laid.
He creeps, he walks, and issuing into man,
Grudges their life from whence his own began.
Retchless of laws, affects to rule alone,
Anxious to reign, and restless on the throne:
First vegetive, then feels, and reasons last;
Rich of three souls, and lives all three to waste.
Some thus; but thousands more in flow'r of age:
For few arrive to run the latter stage.
Sunk in the first, in battle some are slain,
And others whelm'd beneath the stormy main.

What makes all this, but Jupiter the king,
At whose command we perish, and we spring?
Then 'tis our best, since thus ordain'd to die,
To make a virtue of necessity.
Take what he gives, since to rebel is vain;
The bad grows better, which we well sustain;
And cou'd we chuse the time, and chuse aright,
'Tis best to die, our honour at the height.
When we have done our ancestors no shame,
But serv'd our friends, and well secur'd our fame;
Then should we wish our happy life to close,
And leave no more for Fortune to dispose;
So should we make our death a glad relief,
From future shame, from sickness, and from grief:
Enjoying while we live the present hour,
And dying in our excellence and flow'r.
Then round our death-bed ev'ry friend shou'd run,
And joyous of our conquest early won:
While the malicious world, with envious tears,
Shou'd grudge our happy end, and wish it theirs.
Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,
Why shou'd we mourn, that he so soon is freed,
Or call untimely, what the gods decreed?
With grief as just a friend may be deplor'd,
From a foul prison to free air restor'd.
Ought he to thank his kinsman, or his wife,
Cou'd tears recall him into wretched life!
Their sorrow hurts themselves; on him is lost;
And worse than both, offends his happy ghost.
What then remains, but after past annoy,
To take the good vicissitude of joy?

To thank the gracious gods for what they give,
 Possess our souls, and while we live, to live?
 Ordain we then two sorrows to combine,
 And in one point th' extremes of grief to join;
 That thence resulting joy may be renew'd,
 As jarring notes in harmony conclude.
 Then I propose, that Palamon shall be
 In marriage join'd with beauteous Emily;
 For which already I have gain'd th' assent
 Of my free people in full parliament.
 Long love to her has born the faithful knight,
 And well deserv'd, had fortune done him right:
 'Tis time to mend her fault; since Emily
 By Arcite's death from former vows is free:
 If you, fair sister, ratify th' accord,
 And take him for your husband, and your lord.
 'Tis no dishonour to confer your grace
 On one descended from a royal race:
 And, were he less, yet years of service past
 From grateful souls exact reward at last:
 Pity is Heav'n's and your's: Nor can she find
 A throne so soft as in a woman's mind.
 He said; she blush'd; and as o'eraw'd by might,
 Seem'd to give Theseus, what she gave the knight.
 Then turning to the Theban, thus he said:
 Small arguments are needful to persuade
 Your temper to comply with my command;
 And speaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.
 Smil'd Venus, to behold her own true knight
 Obtain the conquest, though he lost the fight,
 And bless'd with nuptial bliss the sweet laborious
 night.

}

Eros, and Anteros, on either side,
One fir'd the bridegroom, and one warm'd the bride;
And long-attending Hymen from above
Showr'd on the bed the whole Idalian grove.
All of a tenour was their after-life,
No day discolour'd with domestic strife;
No jealousy, but mutual truth believ'd,
Secure repose, and kindness undeceiv'd.
Thus Heav'n, beyond the compass of his thought,
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.
So may the Queen of Love long duty bless,
And all true lovers find the same success.

The End of the Third Book.



TO
MY HONOUR'D KINSMAN,
JOHN DRYDEN,
OF
CHESTERTON,
IN THE
COUNTY of HUNTINGDON,
ESQUIRE.

HOW blest'd is he, who leads a country life,
Unvex'd with anxious cares, and void of strife !
Who studying peace, and shunning civil rage,
Enjoy'd his youth, and now enjoys his age :
All who deserve his love, he makes his own ;
And, to be lov'd himself, needs only to be known.
Just, good, and wise, contending neighbours come
From your award, to wait their final doom ;
And, foes before, return in friendship home.
Without their cost, you terminate the cause ;
And save th' expence of long litigious laws :

136 TO MY HONOUR'D KINSMAN,

Where suits are travers'd ; and so little won,
That he who conquers, is but last undone :
Such are not your decrees ; but so design'd,
The sanction leaves a lasting peace behind ;
Like your own soul, serene ; a pattern of your mind. }

Promoting concord, and composing strife,
Lord of yourself, uncumber'd with a wife ;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence succeeds a short delight :
Minds are so hardly match'd, that ev'n the first,
Though pair'd by Heav'n, in Paradise, were curs'd.
For man and woman, though in one they grow,
Yet, first or last, return again to two.
He to God's image, she to his was made ;
So, farther from the fount, the stream at random stray'd.

How cou'd he stand, when put to double pain,
He must a weaker than himself sustain !
Each might have stood perhaps ; but each alone :
Two wrestlers help to pull each other down.

Not that my verse wou'd blemish all the fair ;
But yet, if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware ;
And better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare. }
Thus have you shunn'd, and shun the married state,
Trusting as little as you can to fate.

No porter guards the passage of your door ;
T' admit the wealthy, and exclude the poor :
For God, who gave the riches, gave the heart
To sanctify the whole, by giving part :
Heav'n, who foresaw the will, the means has wrought,
And to the second son, a blessing brought :
The first-begotten had his father's share ;
But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.

So may your stores, and fruitful fields increase;
And ever be you blest'd, who live to blest.

As Ceres sow'd, where e'er her chariot flew;

As Heav'n in deserts rain'd the bread of dew,

So free to many, to relations most,

You feed with manna your own Israel-host.

With crowds attended of your ancient race,

You seek the champion-sports, or sylvan-chace:

With well-breath'd beagles, you surround the wood;

Ev'n then, industrious of the common good:

And often have you brought the wily fox

To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks;

Chas'd ev'n amid the folds; and made to bleed,

Like felons, where they did the murd'rous deed.

This fiery game your active youth maintain'd;

Not yet by years extinguish'd, though restrain'd:

You season still with sports your serious hours;

For age but tastes of pleasures, youth devours.

The hare, in pastures or in plains is found,

Emblem of human life, who runs the round;

And, after all his wand'ring ways are done,

His circle fills, and ends where he begun,

Just as the setting meets the rising sun.

Thus princes ease their cares; but happier he,

Who seeks not pleasure thro' necessity,

Than such as once on slipp'ry thrones were plac'd;

And chas'ing, sigh to think themselves are chas'd.

So liv'd our sires, e'er doctors learn'd to kill,

And multiply'd, with theirs, the weekly bill:

The first physicians by debauch were made:

Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.

138 TO MY HONOUR'D KINSMAN,

Pity the gen'rous kind their cares bestow
To search forbidden truths; (a sin to know;)
To which, if human science cou'd attain,
The doom of death; pronounc'd by God, were vain.
In vain the leech wou'd interpose delay;
Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey.

What help from art's endeavours can we have!
Guibbons but guesſes, nor is ſure to ſave:
But Maurus ſweeps whole parishes, and peoples
ev'ry grave. }

And no more mercy to mankind will use,
Than when he robb'd and murder'd Maro's Muse.
Wou'dst thou be soon dispatch'd, and perish whole?
Trust Maurus with thy life, and M-lb-rn with thy soul.

By chace our long-liv'd fathers earn'd their food;
Toil strung the nerves, and purify'd the blood:
But we, their sons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindl'd down to threescore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields, for health unbought,
Than see the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend;
God never made his work for man to mend.

The tree of knowledge, once in Eden plac'd,
Was easy found, but was forbid the taste:
O, had our grandsire walk'd without his wife,
He first had sought the better plant of life!
Now, both are lost; yet, wandering in the dark,
Physicians, for the tree, have found the bark.
They, lab'ring for relief of human kind,
With sharpen'd sight some remedies may find;
Th' apothecary-train is wholly blind. }

From files a random recipe they take,
And many deaths of one prescription make.
Garth, gen'rous as his Muse, prescribes and gives;
The shop-man sells; and by destruction lives:
Ungrateful tribe! who, like the viper's brood,
From med'cine issuing, suck their mother's blood!
Let these obey; and let the learn'd prescribe;
That men may die, without a double bribe:
Let them, but under their superiors kill;
When doctors first have sign'd the bloody bill:
He escapes the best, who nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields, in draughts of vital air.

You hoard not health for your own private use;
But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urg'd, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your lov'd retreat,
And sends to senates, charg'd with common care
Which none more shuns; and none can better bear.
Where cou'd they find another form'd so fit,
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit?
Were these both wanting, (as they both abound)
Where cou'd so firm integrity be found?

Well-born, and wealthy; wanting no support,
You steer betwixt the country and the court;
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor grudging give, what public needs require.
Part must be left, a fund when foes invade;
And part employ'd to roll the wat'ry trade;
Ev'n Canaan's happy land, when worn with toil,
Requir'd a sabbath-year, to mend the meagre soil.

Good senators, (and such are you,) so give,
That kings may be supply'd, the people thrive.

And he, when want requires, is truly wise,
 Who flights not foreign aids, nor over-buys ;
 But, on our native strength, in time of need, relies.
 Munster was bought, we boast not the success ;
 Who fights for gain, for greater, makes his peace.

Our foes, compell'd by need, have peace embrac'd :
 The peace both parties want, is like to last :
 Which, if secure, securely we may trade ;
 Or, not secure, shou'd never have been made.
 Safe in ourselves, while on ourselves we stand ;
 The sea is ours, and that defends the land.
 Be, then, the naval stores the nations care,
 New ships to build, and batter'd to repair.

Observe the war, in ev'ry annual course ;
 What has been done, was done with British force :
 Namur subdu'd, is England's palm alone ;
 The rest besieg'd ; but we constrain'd the town.
 We saw th' event that follow'd our success ;
 France, though pretending arms, pursu'd the peace ;
 Oblig'd, by one sole treaty, to restore
 What twenty years of war had won before.
 Enough for Europe has our Albion fought ;
 Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.
 When once the Persian King was put to flight,
 The weary Macedons refus'd to fight ;
 Themselves their own mortality confess'd ;
 And left the son of Jove to quarrel for the rest.

Ev'n victors are by victories undone ;
 Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
 To Carthage was recall'd, too late, to keep his own.
 While sore of battle, while our wounds are green,
 Why shou'd we tempt the doubtful dye again ?

In wars renew'd, uncertain of success,
Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.

A patriot, both the king and country serves;
Prerogative, and privilege preserves:
Of each our laws the certain limit show;
One must not ebb, nor t' other overflow:
Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand;
The barriers of the state on either hand:
May neither overflow; for then they drown the land.
When both are full, they feed our blest'd abode;
Like those that water'd once the Paradise of God.

Some overpoise of sway, by turns they share;
In peace, the people, and the prince, in war:
Consuls of mod'rate pow'r in calms were made;
When the Gauls came, one sole dictator sway'd.
Patriots, in peace, assert the peoples right,
With noble stubbornness resisting might:
No lawless mandates from the court receive;
Nor lend by force; but in a body give.
Such was your gen'rous grandfire; free to grant
In parliaments, that weigh'd their prince's want:
But so tenacious of the common cause,
As not to lend the king against his laws.
And, in a lothsome dungeon doom'd to lie,
In bonds retain'd his birthright liberty,
And sham'd oppression, till it set him free.

O true descendent of a patriot line,
Who, while thou shar'st their lustre, lend'st 'em thine!
Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see;
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee:
The beauties to th' original I owe;
Which, when I miss, my own defects I show.

142 TO MY HONOUR'D KINSMAN, &c.

Nor think the kindred Muses thy disgrace;
A poet is not born in ev'ry race;
Two of a house, few ages can afford;
One to perform, another to record.
Praise-worthy actions are by thee embrac'd;
And 'tis my praise, to make thy praises last.
For ev'n when death dissolves our human frame,
The soul returns to Heav'n, from whence it came:
Earth keeps the body, verse preserves the fame. }

M E L E A G E R

A N D

A T A L A N T A,

Out of the EIGHTH BOOK of OVID's
METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION to the former STORY.

OVID, having told how Theseus had freed Athens from the tribute of children, (which was imposed on them by Minos' King of Cræta), by killing the Minotaur, here makes a digression to the story of Meleager and Atalanta, which is one of the most inartificial connections in all the Metamorphoses : For he only says, that Theseus obtained such honour from that combat, that all Greece had recourse to him in their necessities ; and, amongst others, Calydon, though the heroe of that country, Prince Meleager, was then living.

FROM him the Calydonians sought relief ;
Tho' valiant Meleagros was their chief.
'The cause a boar, who ravag'd far and near ;
Of Cynthia's wrath th' avenging minister.

For Oeneus with autumnal plenty blest'd,
 By gifts to heav'n his gratitude express'd:
 Cull'd sheafs, to Ceres; to Lyaeus, wine;
 To Pan and Pales offer'd sheep and kine;
 And fat of olives to Minerva's shrine.
 Beginning from the rural gods, his hand
 Was lib'ral to the pow'rs of high command:
 Each deity in ev'ry kind was blest'd,
 Till at Diana's fane th' invidious honour ceas'd.

Wrath touches ev'n the gods; the Queen of night,
 Fir'd with disdain, and jealous of her right,
 Unhonour'd though I am, at least, said she,
 Not unreveng'd that impious act shall be.
 Swift as the word, she sped the boar away,
 With charge on those devoted fields to prey.
 No larger bulls th' Egyptian pastures feed,
 And none so large Sicilian meadows breed:
 His eye-balls glare with fire suffus'd with blood;
 His neck shoots up a thick-set thorny wood;
 His bristled back a trench impal'd appears,
 And stands erected, like a field of spears.
 Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting sound,
 And part he churps, and part befoams the ground.
 For tusks with Indian elephants he strove,
 And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove.
 He burns the leaves; the scorching blast invades
 The tender corn, and shrivels up the blades:
 Or, suff'ring not their yellow beards to rear,
 He tramples down the spikes, and intercepts the year.
 In vain the barns expect their promis'd load,
 Nor barns at home, nor reeks are heap'd abroad:

In vain the hinds the threshing-floor prepare,
 And exercise their flails in empty air.
 With olives ever-green the ground is strow'd,
 And grapes ungather'd shed their gen'rous blood.
 Amid the fold he rages, nor the sheep
 Their shepherds, nor the grooms their bulls can keep.

From fields to walls the frighted rabble run,
 Nor think themselves secure within the town;
 Till Meleagros, and his chosen crew,
 Contemn the danger, and the praise pursue.
 Fair Leda's twins (in time to stars decreed)
 One fought on foot, one curb'd the fiery steed;
 Then issu'd forth fam'd Jason after these,
 Who mann'd the foremost ship that sail'd the seas;
 Then Theseus join'd with bold Perithous came;
 A single concord in a double name:
 The Thestian sons, Idas who swiftly ran,
 And Ceneus, once a woman, now a man:
 Lynceus, with eagles eyes, and lions heart;
 Leucippus, with his never-erring dart;
 Acastus, Phileus, Phoenix, Telamon,
 Echion, Lelex, and Eurytion,
 Achilles Father, and great Phocus' son;
 Dryas the fierce, and Hippasus the strong;
 With twice old Iolas, and Nestor then but young:
 Laertes active, and Ancaeus bold;
 Mopsus the sage, who future things foretold;
 And t' other seer, yet by his wife * unfold.
 A thousand others of immortal fame;
 Among the rest, fair Atalanta came;

* *Amphiaraus.*

Grace of the woods! a diamond buckle bound
 Her vest behind, that else had flow'd upon the ground,
 And shew'd her buskin'd legs; her head was bare,
 But for her native ornament of hair;
 Which in a simple knot was ty'd above,
 Sweet negligence! unheeded bait of love!
 Her founding quiver, on her shoulder ty'd,
 One hand a dart, and one a bow supply'd.
 Such was her face, as in a nymph display'd
 A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betray'd
 The blushing beauties of a modest maid.
 The Calydonian chief at once the dame
 Beheld, at once his heart receiv'd the flame,
 With heav'n's averse. O happy youth, he cry'd,
 For whom thy fates reserve so fair a bride!
 He sigh'd, and had no leisure more to say;
 His honour call'd his eyes another way,
 And forc'd him to pursue the now neglected prey.

There stood a forest on a mountain's brow,
 Which over-look'd the shaded plains below;
 No founding æx presum'd those trees to bite;
 Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.
 The heroes there arriv'd, some spread around
 The toils; some search the footsteps on the ground;
 Some from the chains the faithful dogs unbound.
 Of action eager, and intent in thought,
 The chiefs their honourable danger fought.
 A valley stood below, the common drain
 Of waters from above, and falling rain:
 The bottom was a moist and marshy ground,
 Whose edges were with bending osiers crown'd.

The knotty bulrush next in order stood,
 And all within of reeds a trembling wood.
 From hence the boar was rous'd, and sprung amain
 Like lightning sudden, on the warrior train;
 Beats down the trees before him, shakes the ground,
 The forest echoes to the crackling sound;
 Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring around.
 All stood with their protended spears prepar'd,
 With broad steel heads the brandish'd weapons glar'd.
 The beast, impetuous, with his tusks aside,
 Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs divide:
 All spend their mouth aloof, but none abide.
 Echion threw the first, but miss'd his mark,
 And stuck his boar-spear on maple's bark.
 Then Jason: And his javelin seem'd to take,
 But fail'd with over force, and whiz'd above his back.
 Mopsus was next; but e'er he threw, address'd
 To Phoebus, thus: O Patron, help thy priest:
 If I adore, and ever have ador'd,
 Thy pow'r divine, thy present aid afford;
 That I may reach the beast. The god allow'd
 His pray'r, and smiling, gave him what he cou'd.
 He reach'd the savage, but no blood he drew,
 Dian unarm'd the javelin as it flew.
 This chaf'd the boar, his nostrils flames expire,
 And his red eye-balls roll with living fire.
 Whirl'd from a sling, or from an engine thrown,
 Amidst the foes so flies a mighty stone,
 As flew the beast: The left wing put to flight,
 The chiefs o'erborn, he rushes on the right.
 Empalamos and Pelagon he laid
 In dust, and next to death, but for their fellows aid.

Onesimus far'd worse, prepar'd to fly,
 The fatal fang drove deep within his thigh,
 And cut the nerves; the nerves no more sustain
 The bulk; the bulk unprop'd, falls headlong on the
 Nestor had fail'd the fall of Troy to see, [plain
 But leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a tree;
 Then gath'ring up his sect, look'd down with fear,
 And thought his monstrous foe was still too near.
 Against a stump his tusk the monster grinds,
 And in the sharpen'd edge new vigour finds;
 Then trusting to his arms, young Othrys found,
 And ranch'd his hips with one continu'd wound.
 Now Leda's twins, the future stars, appear;
 White were their habits, white their horses were:
 Conspicuous both, and both in act to throw
 Their trembling lances brandish'd at the foe:
 Nor had they miss'd; but he to thickets fled,
 Conceal'd from aiming spears, not pervious to the steel
 But Telamon rush'd in, and happ'd to meet
 A rising root, that held his fastned feet;
 So down he fell; whom, sprawling on the ground,
 His brother from the wooden gyves unbound.

Mean time the virgin-huntress was not slow
 T' expel the shaft from her contracted bow:
 Beneath his ear the fastned arrow flood,
 And from the wound appear'd the trickling blood.
 She blush'd for joy; but Meleagros rais'd
 His voice with loud applause, and the fair archer prais'd
 He was the first to see, and first to show
 His friends the marks of the successful blow.
 Nor shall thy valour want the praises due.
 He said; a virtuous envy seiz'd the crew.

They shout; the shouting animates their hearts;
 And all at once employ their thronging darts:
 But out of order thrown, in air they join;
 And multitude makes frustrate the design.
 With both his hands the proud Ancaeus takes,
 And flourishes his double-biting ax;
 Then forward to his fate he took a stride
 Before the rest, and to his fellows cry'd:
 Give place, and mark the difference, if you can,
 Between a woman warrior and a man;
 The boar is doom'd; nor though Diana lend
 Her aid, Diana can her beast defend.
 Thus boasted he; then stretch'd, on tiptoe stood,
 Secure to make his empty promise good.
 But the more wary beast prevents the blow,
 And upward rips the groin of his audacious foe.
 Ancaeus falls; his bowels from the wound
 Rush out, and clotted blood distains the ground.
 Perithous, no small portion of the war
 Press'd on; and shook his lance; to whom, from far,
 Thus Theseus cry'd; O stay, my better part!
 My more than mistress! of my heart, the heart!
 The strong may fight aloof; Ancaeus try'd
 His force too near, and by presuming dy'd:
 He said, and while he spake his javelin threw,
 Hissing in air th' unerring weapon flew;
 But on an arm of oak, that stood betwixt
 The marksman and the mark, his lance he fix'd.
 Once more bold Jason threw, but fail'd to wound
 The boar, and slew an undeserving hound;
 And through the dog the dart was nail'd to ground.

Two spears from Meleager's hand were sent,
 With equal force, but various in th' event :
 The first was fix'd in earth, the second stood
 On the boar's bristled back, and deeply drank his blood.
 Now while the tortur'd savage turns around,
 And flings about his foam, impatient of the wound,
 The wound's great author close at hand provokes
 His rage, and plies him with redoubl'd strokes;
 Wheels as he wheels; and with his pointed dart
 Explores the nearest passage to his heart.
 Quick, and more quick he spins in giddy gyres,
 Then falls, and in much foam his soul expires.
 This act with shouts, heav'n high, the friendly band
 Applaud, and strain in theirs the victor-hand.
 Then all approach the slain with vast surprize,
 Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies,
 And seare secure, reach out their spears afar, [war.
 And blood their points, to prove their partnership of
 But he, the conqu'ring chief, his foot impress'd
 On the strong neck of that destructive beast;
 And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
 Accept, said he, fair Nonacrine, my prize,
 And, though inferior, suffer me to join
 My labours, and my part of praise with thine :
 At this presents her with the tusky head
 And chine, with rising bristles roughly spread.
 Glad, she receiv'd the gift; and seem'd to take
 With double pleasure, for the giver's sake.
 The rest were seiz'd with sullen discontent,
 And a deaf murmur through the squadron went.
 All envy'd; but the Thesitian brethren show'd
 The least respect, and thus they vent their spleen aloud.

Lay down those honour'd spoils, nor think to share,
 Weak woman, as thou art, the prize of war;
 Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
 Since Meleagros from our lineage came.
 Trust not thy beauty; but restore the prize,
 Which he, besotted on that face and eyes,
 Would rend from us. At this, inflam'd with spite,
 From her they snatch the gift, from him the giver's
 right.

But soon th' impatient prince his faulchion drew,
 And cry'd, Ye robbers of another's due,
 Now learn the diff'rence, at your proper cost,
 Betwixt true valour and an empty boast.
 At this advanc'd, and sudden as the word,
 In proud Ploxippus' bosom plung'd the sword:
 Toxeus amaz'd, and with amazement slow,
 Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
 Stood doubting; and while doubting thus he stood,
 Receiv'd the steel bath'd in his brother's blood.

Pleas'd with the first, unknown the second news,
 Althea to the temples pays their dues,
 For her son's conquest; when at length appear
 Her grisly brethren stretch'd upon the bier:
 Pale at the sudden sight, she chang'd her cheer,
 And with her cheer her robes; but hearing tell
 The cause, the manner, and by whom they fell,
 'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage were one
 Within her soul; at last 'twas rage alone;
 Which burning upwards in succession dries
 The tears that stood consid'ring in her eyes.

There lay a log unlighted on the hearth:
 When she was lab'ring in the throws of birth

For th'unborn chief; the fatal sisters came,
 And rais'd it up, and tofs'd it on the flame:
 Then on the rock a scanty measure place
 Of vital flax, and turn'd the wheel apace;
 And turning fung, to this red brand and thee,
 O new-born babe, we give an equal destiny:
 So vanish'd out of view. The frightened dame
 Sprung hasty from her bed, and quench'd the flame:
 The log, in secret lock'd, she kept with care,
 And that, while thus preserv'd, preserv'd her heir.
 This brand she now produc'd; and first she strows
 The hearth with heaps of chips, and after blows;
 Thrice heav'd her hand, and heav'd, she thrice re-
 press'd:

The sister and the mother long contest
 Two doubtful titles in one tender breast:
 And now her eyes and cheeks with fury glow;
 Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity flow;
 Now lowring looks presage approaching storms;
 And now prevailing love her face reforms:
 Resolv'd, she doubts again; the tears she dry'd
 With burning rage, are by new tears supply'd:
 And as a ship, which winds and waves assail,
 Now with the current drives, now with the gale,
 Both opposite, and neither long-prevail;
 She feels a double force, by turns obeys
 Th'imperious tempest, and th'impetuous seas:
 So fares Althea's mind; she first relents
 With pity, of that pity then repents:
 Sister and mother long the scales divide,
 But the beam nodded on the sister's side.

Sometimes she softly sigh'd, then roar'd aloud;
But sighs were stifl'd in the cries of blood.

The pious, impious wretch at length decreed,
To please her brother's ghost, her son shou'd bleed :
And when the fun'ral flames began to rise,
Receive, she said, a sister's sacrifice;

A mother's bowels burn : High in her hand,
Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal brand ;
Then thrice before the kindled pile she bow'd,
And the three Furies thrice invok'd aloud.

Come, come, revenging sisters, come and view
A sister paying her dead brother's due.

A crime I punish, and a crime commit;
But blood for blood, and death for death is fit :
Great crimes must be with greater crimes repaid,
And second funerals on the former laid.

Let the whole household in one ruin fall,
And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.

Shall Fate to happy Oeneus still allow
One son, while Thestius stands depriv'd of two ?
Better three lost, than one unpunish'd go.

Take then, dear ghosts, (while yet admitted new
In hell you wait my duty), take your due;
A costly off'ring on your tomb is laid,
When with my blood the price of yours is paid.

Ah ! whether am I hurry'd ? ah ! forgive,
Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live :
A mother cannot give him death, though he
Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.

Then shall th' unpunish'd wretch insult the slain,
Triumphant live, nor only live, but reign ?

While you, thin shades, the sport of winds, are tofs'd
 O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning coast.
 I cannot, cannot bear; 'tis past, 'tis done;
 Perish this impious, this detested son:
 Perish his fire, and perish I withal;
 And let the house's heir, and the hop'd kingdom fall.
 Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
 And where the pains with which ten months I strove!
 Ah! hadst thou dy'd, my son, in infant years,
 Thy little hearse had been bedew'd with tears.

Thou liv'st by me; to me thy breath resign;
 Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.
 Thy life by double title I require;
 Once giv'n at birth, and once preserv'd from fire:
 One murder pay, or add one murder more,
 And me to them who fell by thee restore.

I wou'd, but cannot; my son's image stands
 Before my sight; and now their angry hands
 My brothers hold, and vengeance these exact;
 This pleads compassion, and repents the fact.

He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his doom:
 My brothers, though unjustly, shall o'ercome.
 But having paid their injur'd ghosts their due,
 My son requires my death, and mine shall his pursue.

At this, for the last time, she lifts her hand,
 Averts her eyes, and, half unwilling, drops the brand.
 'The brand, amid the flaming fewel thrown,
 Or drew, or seem'd to draw, a dying groan:
 'The fires themselves but faintly lick'd their prey,
 'Then loath'd their impious food, and wou'd have shrunk
 away.

Just then the heroe cast a doleful cry,
 And in those absent flames began to fry :
 'The blind contagion rag'd within his veins;
 But he with manly patience bore his pains.
 He fear'd not Fate, but only griev'd to die
 Without an honest wound, and by a death so dry.
 Happy Ancaeus, thrice aloud he cry'd,
 With what becoming fate in arms he dy'd!
 Then call'd his brothers, sisters, fire, around,
 And her to whom his nuptial vows were bound;
 Perhaps his mother: A long sigh he drew,
 And his voice failing, took his last adieu.
 For as the flames augment, and as they stay
 At their full height, then languish to decay,
 They rise and sink by fits; at last they soar
 In one bright blaze, and then descend no more.
 Just so his inward heats at height, impair,
 Till the last burning breath shoots out the soul in air.

Now lofty Calydon in ruins lies;
 All ages, all degrees unflueice their eyes;
 And heav'n and earth resound with murmurs,
 groans, and cries.

Matrons and maidens beat their breasts, and tear
 Their habits, and root up their scatter'd hair.
 The wretched father, father now no more,
 With sorrow sunk, lies prostrate on the floor,
 Deforms his hoary locks with dust obscene,
 And curses age, and loaths a life prolong'd with pain.
 By steel her stubborn soul his mother freed,
 And punish'd on herself her impious deed.

Had I a hundred tongues, a wit so large
 As cou'd their hundred offices discharge;

Had Phoebus all his Helicon bestow'd
In all the streams inspiring all the god; [vain
Those tongues, that wit, those streams, that god, in
Wou'd offer to describe his sisters pain:
They beat their breasts with many a bruising blow,
Till they turn'd livid, and corrupt the snow.
The corpse they cherish, while the corpse remains,
And exercise and rub with fruitless pains;
And when to fun'ral flames 'tis borne away,
They kiss the bed on which the body lay;
And when those fun'ral flames no longer burn,
(The dust compos'd within a pious urn)
Ev'n in that urn their brother they confess,
And hug it in their arms, and to their bosoms press.

His tomb is rais'd; then, stretch'd along the ground,
Those living monuments his tomb surround;
Ev'n to his name, inscrib'd, their tears they pay,
Till tears and kisses wear his name away.

But Cynthia now had all her fury spent,
Not with less ruin than a race content;
Excepting Gorge, perish'd all the seed,
And * her whom heav'n for Hercules decreed.
Sate at last, no longer she pursu'd
The weeping sisters; but with wings endu'd,
And horny beaks, and sent to flit in air;
Who yearly round the tomb in feather'd flocks repair.

* Dejanira.

SIGISMONDA

AND

GUISCARDO.

FROM

BOCCACE.

WHILE Norman Tancred in Salerno reign'd,
The title of a gracious prince he gain'd;
Till turn'd a tyrant in his latter days,
He lost the lustre of his former praise;
And from the bright meridian where he stood,
Descending, dipp'd his hands in lovers blood.
This prince, of Fortune's favour long possess'd,
Yet was with one fair daughter only blest'd;
And blest'd he might have been with her alone;
But oh! how much more happy, had he none!
She was his care, his hope, and his delight,
Most in his thought, and ever in his sight:
Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear;
She liv'd by him, and now he liv'd in her.
For this, when ripe for marriage, he delay'd
Her nuptial bands, and kept her long a maid;
As envying any else should share a part
Of what was his, and claiming all her heart.
At length, as public decency requir'd,
And all his vassals eagerly desir'd,

With mind averſe, he rather underwent
His peoples will, than gave his own conſent :
So was ſhe torn, as from a lover's ſide,
And made almoſt in his deſpite a bride.

Short were her marriage-joys; for in the prime
Of youth, her lord expir'd before his time:
And to her father's court, in little ſpace,
Reſtor'd anew, ſhe held a higher place;
More lov'd, and more exalted into grace.
This princeſs, freſh and young, and fair and wiſe,
The worſhipp'd idol of her father's eyes,
Did all her ſex in ev'ry grace exceed,
And had more wit beſide than women need.

Youth, health, and eaſe, and moſt an amorous
mind,
To ſecond nuptials had her thoughts inclin'd;
And former joys had left a ſecret ſting behind.
But prodigal in ev'ry other grant,
Her fire left unſupply'd her only want;
And ſhe, betwixt her modeſty and pride,
Her wiſhes, which ſhe could not help, would hide.

Reſolv'd at laſt to loſe no longer time,
And yet to pleaſe herſelf without a crime,
She caſt her eyes around the court, to find
A worthy ſubject ſuiting to her mind;
To him in holy nuptials to be ty'd,
A ſeeming widow, and a ſecret bride.
Among the train of courtiers, one ſhe found
With all the gifts of bounteous Nature crown'd,
Of gentle blood, but one whoſe niggard fate
Had ſet him far below her high eſtate;

Guiscard his name was call'd; of blooming age,
 Now squire to Tancred, and before his page:
 To him, the choice of all the shining crowd,
 Her heart the noble Sigismonda vow'd.

Yet hitherto she kept her love conceal'd,
 And with close glances every day beheld
 The graceful youth; and ev'ry day increas'd
 The raging fire that burn'd within her breast;
 Some secret charm did all his acts attend,
 And what his fortune wanted hers could mend:
 Till, as the fire will force its outward way,
 Or, in the prison pent, consume the prey;
 So long her earnest eyes on his were set,
 At length their twisted rays together met;
 And he, surpriz'd with humble joy, survey'd
 One sweet regard shot by the royal maid:
 Not well assur'd, while doubtful hopes he nurs'd,
 A second glance came gliding like the first;
 And he who saw the sharpness of the dart,
 Without defence, receiv'd it in his heart.
 In public though their passion wanted speech,
 Yet mutual looks interpreted for each:
 Time, ways, and means of meeting were deny'd;
 But all those wants ingenious Love supply'd.
 Th' inventive god, who never fails his part,
 Inspires the wit, when once he warms the heart.

When Guiscard next was in the circle seen,
 Where Sigismonda held the place of queen,
 A hollow cane within her hand she brought,
 But in the concave had inclos'd a note;
 With this she seem'd to play, and, as in sport,
 Toss'd to her love, in presence of the court:

Take it, she said; and when your needs require,
 This little brand will serve to light your fire.
 He took it with a bow, and soon divin'd
 The seeming toy was not for nought design'd:
 But when retir'd, so long with curious eyes
 He view'd the present, that he found the prize.
 Much was in little writ; and all convey'd
 With cautious care, for fear to be betray'd
 By some false confident, or fav'rite maid.
 The time, the place, the manner how to meet,
 Were all in punctual order plainly writ.
 But since a trust must be, she thought it best
 To put it out of laymens pow'r at least,
 And for their solemn vows prepar'd a priest.

Guiscard (her secret purpose understood)
 With joy prepar'd to meet the coming good;
 Nor pains nor danger was resolv'd to spare,
 But use the means appointed by the fair.

Near the proud palace of Salerno stood
 A mount of rough ascent, and thick with wood;
 Through this a cave was dug with vast expence,
 The work it seem'd of some suspicious prince,
 Who, when abusing pow'r with lawless might,
 From public justice would secure his flight.
 The passage made by many a winding way,
 Reach'd ev'n the room in which the tyrant lay.
 Fit for his purpose, on a lower floor
 He lodg'd, whose issue was an iron door,
 From whence, by stairs descending to the ground,
 In the blind grot a safe retreat he found.
 Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
 With brambles, choak'd by time, and now unknown.

A rift there was, which from the mountain's height
Convey'd a glimm'ring and malignant light;
A breathing-place to draw the damps away;
A twilight of an intercepted day.

The tyrant's den, whose use, though lost to fame,
Was now th' apartment of the royal dame,
The cavern only to her father known,
By him was to his darling daughter shown.
Neglected long she let the secret rest,
Till love recall'd it to her lab'ring breast,
And hinted as the way by heav'n design'd
The teacher, by the means he taught, to blind.
What will not women do, when need inspires
Their wit, or love their inclination fires!
Though jealousy of state th' invention found,
Yet love refin'd upon the former ground.

That way, the tyrant had reserv'd, to fly
Pursuing hate, now serv'd to bring two lovers nigh.

The dame, who long in vain had kept the key,
Bold by desire, explor'd the secret way;
Now try'd the stairs, and wading through the night,
Search'd all the deep recess, and issu'd into light.
All this her letter had so well explain'd,
Th' instructed youth might compass what remain'd:
The cavern-mouth alone was hard to find,
Because the path diffus'd, was out of mind:
But in what quarter of the cops it lay,
His eye by certain level could survey:
Yet (for the wood perplex'd with thorns he knew)
A frock of leather o'er his limbs he drew:
And thus provided, search'd the brake around,
Till the choak'd entry of the cave he found.

Thus, all prepar'd, the promis'd hour arriv'd,
 So long expected, and so well contriv'd :
 With love to friend, th' impatient lover went,
 Fenc'd from the thorns, and trod the deep descent.
 The conscious priest, who was suborn'd before,
 Stood ready posted at the postern-door ;
 The maids in distant rooms were sent to rest,
 And nothing wanted but th' invited guest.
 He came, and knocking thrice, without delay,
 The longing lady heard, and turn'd the key ;
 At once invaded him with all her charms,
 And the first step he made, was in her arms :
 The leathern out-side, boistrous as it was,
 Gave way, and bent beneath her strict embrace :
 On either side the kisses flew so thick,
 That neither he nor she had breath to speak.
 The holy man amaz'd at what he saw,
 Made haste to sanctify the bliss by law ;
 And mutter'd fast the matrimony o'er,
 For fear committed sin should get before.
 His work perform'd, he left the pair alone,
 Because he knew he could not go too soon ;
 His presence odious, when his task was done.
 What thoughts he had, beseems not me to say ;
 Though some surmise he went to fast and pray,
 And needed both, to drive the tempting thoughts
 away.

The foe once gone, they took their full delight ;
 'Twas restless rage, and tempest all the night :
 For greedy Love each moment would employ,
 And grudg'd the shortest pauses of their joy.

Thus were their loves auspiciously begun,
And thus with secret care were carried on.
The stealth itself did appetite restore,
And look'd so like a sin, it pleas'd the more.

The cave was now become a common way,
The wicket, often open'd, knew the key :
Love rioted secure, and long enjoy'd,
Was ever eager, and was never cloy'd.

But as extremes are short of ill and good ;
And tides at highest mark regorge the flood :
So Fate, that could no more improve their joy,
Took a malicious pleasure to destroy.

Tancred, who fondly lov'd, and whose delight
Was plac'd in his fair daughter's daily sight,
Of custom, when his state-affairs were done,
Would pass his pleasing hours with her alone ;
And, as a father's privilege allow'd,
Without attendance of th' officious crowd.

It happen'd once, that, when in heat of day,
He try'd to sleep, as was his usual way ;
The balmy slumber fled his wakeful eyes,
And forc'd him, in his own despite, to rise :
Of sleep forsaken, to relieve his care,
He sought the conversation of the fair ;
But with her train of damsels she was gone,
In shady walks the scorching heat to shun ;
He would not violate that sweet recess,
And found besides a welcome heaviness
That seiz'd his eyes ; and slumber, which forgot,
When call'd before to come, now came unsought.
From light retir'd, behind his daughter's bed,
He for approaching sleep compos'd his head :

A chair was ready, for that use design'd,
 So quilted, that he lay at ease reclin'd ;
 The curtains closely drawn, the light to screen,
 As if he had contriv'd to lie unseen.

Thus cover'd with an artificial night,
 Sleep did his office soon, and seal'd his sight.

With heaven averse, in this ill-omen'd hour,
 Was Guiscard summon'd to the secret bow'r ;
 And the fair nymph, with expectation fir'd,
 From her attending damsels was retir'd :
 For, true to love, she measur'd time so right,
 As not to miss one moment of delight.

The garden, seated on the level floor,
 She left behind, and locking ev'ry door,
 Thought all secure ; but little did she know,
 Blind to her fate, she had inclos'd her foe.
 Attending Guiscard, in his leathern frock,
 Stood ready, with his thrice-repeated knock :
 Thrice with a doleful sound the jarring grate
 Rung deaf, and hollow, and presag'd their fate.
 The door unlock'd, to known delight they haste,
 And panting in each others arms, embrac'd ;
 Rush to the conscious bed, a mutual freight,
 And heedless press it with their wonted weight.

The sudden bound awak'd the sleeping fire,
 And shew'd a sight no parent can desire ;
 His opening eyes at once with odious view
 The love discover'd, and the lover knew :
 He would have cry'd ; but hoping that he dreamt,
 Amazement ty'd his tongue, and stopp'd th' attempt.
 Th' ensuing moment all the truth declar'd,
 But now he stood collected, and prepar'd ;

For malice and revenge had put him on his guard. }

So, like a lion that unheaded lay,
Dissembling sleep, and watchful to betray,
With inward rage he meditates his prey.
The thoughtless pair, indulging their desires,
Alternate kindl'd, and then quench'd their fires;
Nor thinking in the shades of death they play'd,
Full of themselves, themselves alone survey'd,
And, too secure, were by themselves betray'd.
Long time dissolv'd in pleasure thus they lay,
Till nature could no more suffice their play;
Then rose the youth, and through the cave again
Return'd; the princess mingl'd with her train.

Resolv'd his unripe vengeance to defer,
The royal spy, when now the coast was clear,
Sought not the garden, but retir'd unseen,
To brood in secret on his gather'd spleen,
And methodize revenge: To death he griev'd;
And, but he saw the crime, had scarce believ'd.
Th' appointment for th' ensuing night he heard;
And therefore in the cavern had prepar'd
Two brawny yeomen of his trusty guard.

Scarce had unwary Guiscard set his foot
Within the farthest entrance of the grot,
When these in secret ambush ready lay,
And, rushing on the sudden, seiz'd the prey.
Encumber'd with his frock, without defence,
An easy prize, they led the pris'ner thence,
And, as commanded, brought before the prince.
The gloomy sire, too sensible of wrong
To vent his rage in words, restrain'd his tongue;
And only said: Thus servants are preferr'd,
And trusted, thus their sov'reigns they reward.

Had I not seen, had not these eyes receiv'd
 Too clear a proof, I could not have believ'd.
 He paus'd, and choak'd the rest. The youth, who saw
 His forfeit life abandon'd to the law,
 The judge th' accuser, and th' offence to him
 Who had both pow'r and will t' avenge the crime;
 No vain defence prepar'd; but thus reply'd,
 The faults of love by love are justify'd:
 With unresisted might the monarch reigns,
 He levels mountains, and he raises plains;
 And not regarding diff'rence of degree,
 Abas'd your daughter, and exalted me.

This bold return with seeming patience heard,
 The pris'ner was remitted to the guard.
 The sullen tyrant slept not all the night,
 But lonely walking by a winking light,
 Sobb'd, wept, and groan'd, and beat his wither'd breast,
 But would not violate his daughter's rest;
 Who long expecting lay, for bliss prepar'd,
 Listening for noise, and griev'd that none she heard;
 Oft rose, and oft in vain employ'd the key,
 And oft accus'd her lover of delay; [away.
 And pass'd the tedious hours in anxious thoughts }

The morrow came; and at his usual hour
 Old Tancred visited his daughter's bow'r;
 Her cheek (for such his custom was) he kiss'd,
 Then bless'd her kneeling, and her maids dismiss'd.
 The royal dignity thus far maintain'd,
 Now left in private, he no longer feign'd;
 But all at once his grief and rage appear'd,
 And floods of tears ran trickling down his beard.

O Sigismonda, he began to say :

Thrice he began, and thrice was forc'd to stay,

Till words with often trying found their way :

I thought, O Sigismonda, (but how blind

Are parents eyes, their childrens faults to find !)

Thy virtue, birth, and breeding were above

A mean desire, and vulgar sense of love :

Nor less than sight and hearing could convince

So fond a father, and so just a prince,

Of such an unforeseen, and unbeliev'd offence.

Then what indignant sorrow must I have,

To see thee lie subjected to my slave !

A man so smelling of the peoples lee,

The court receiv'd him first for charity ;

And since with no degree of honour grac'd,

But only suffer'd where he first was plac'd ;

A-grov'ling-insect still ; and so design'd

By Nature's hand, nor born of noble kind ;

A thing, by neither man nor woman priz'd,

And scarcely known enough, to be despis'd.

To what has heav'n reserv'd my age ? ah ! why

Should man, when Nature calls, not chuse to die,

Rather than stretch the span of life, to find

Such ills-as Fate has wisely cast behind,

For those to feel whom fond desire to live

Makes covetous of more than life can give !

Each has his share of good ; and when 'tis gone,

The guest, though hungry, cannot rise too soon.

But I, expecting more, in my own wrong

Protracting life, have liv'd a day too long.

If yesterday could be recall'd again,

Ev'n now would I conclude my happy reign.

But 'tis too late, my glorious race is run,
And a dark cloud o'ertakes my setting sun;
Hadst thou not lov'd, or loving sav'd the shame;
If not the sin, by some illustrious name,
This little comfort had reliev'd my mind,
'Twas frailty, not unusual to thy kind:
But thy low fall beneath thy royal blood,
Shews downward appetite to mix with mud.
Thus not the least excuse is left for thee,
Nor the least refuge for unhappy me.

For him I have resolv'd:--- Whom by surprise
I took, and scarce can call it, in disguise:
For such was his attire, as with intent
Of nature, suited to his mean descent.
The harder question yet remains behind,
What pains a parent and a prince can find
To punish an offence of this degenerate kind.
As I have lov'd, and yet I love thee more
Than ever father lov'd a child before;
So that indulgence draws me to forgive:
Nature, that gave thee life, would have thee live.
But, as a public parent of the state,
My justice, and thy crime, requires thy fate.
Fain would I chuse a middle course to steer;
Nature's too kind, and justice too severe:
Speak for us both, and to the balance bring
On either side, the father, and the king.
Heav'n knows, my heart is bent to favour thee;
Make it but scanty weight, and leave the rest to me.
Here stopping with a sigh, he pour'd a flood
Of tears, to make his last expression good.

She, who had heard him speak, nor saw alone
The secret conduct of her love was known;
But he was taken who her soul possess'd,
Felt all the pangs of sorrow in her breast:
And little wanted, but a woman's heart
With cries, and tears, had testify'd her smart.
But in-born worth, that fortune can controul,
New strung, and stiffer bent her softer soul;
The heroine assum'd the woman's place,
Confirm'd her mind, and fortify'd her face.
Why should she beg, or what could she pretend,
When her stern father had condemn'd her friend?
Her life she might have had; but her despair
Of saving his, had put it past her care.
Resolv'd on fate, she would not lose her breath,
But rather than not die, solicit death.
Fix'd on this thought, she not as women use,
Her fault by common frailty would excuse;
But boldly justify'd her innocence,
And while the fact was own'd, deny'd the offence.
Then with dry eyes, and with an open look,
She met his glance mid-way, and thus undaunted spoke,

Tancred, I neither am dispos'd to make
Request for life, nor offer'd life to take;
Much less deny the deed; but least of all
Beneath pretended justice weakly fall.
My words to sacred truth shall be confin'd,
My deeds shall shew the greatness of my mind.
That I have lov'd, I own; that still I love,
I call to witness all the pow'rs above.
Yet more I own; to Guiscard's love I give
The small remaining time I have to live;

And if beyond this life desire can be,
Not Fate itself shall set my passion free.

This first avow'd; nor folly warp'd my mind,
Nor the frail texture of the female kind
Betray'd my virtue; for too well I knew
What honour was, and honour had his due:
Before the holy priest my vows were ty'd;
So came I not a strumpet, but a bride.
This for my fame, and for the public voice:
Yet more; his merits justify'd my choice;
Which had they not, the first election thine,
That bond dissolv'd, the next is freely mine.
Or grant I err'd, (which yet I must deny,)
Had parents pow'r ev'n second vows to tie,
Thy little care to mend my widow'd nights
Has forc'd me to recourse of marriage-rites,
To fill an empty side, and follow known delights.
What have I done in this deserving blame?
State-laws may alter; Nature's are the same:
Those are usurp'd on helpless womankind,
Made without our consent, and wanting pow'r to bind.

Thou, Tancred, better should'st have understood,
That as thy father gave thee flesh and blood,
So gav'st thou me; not from the quarry hew'd,
But of a softer mould, with sense endu'd;
Ev'n softer than thy own, of suppler kind,
More exquisite of taste, and more than man refin'd.
Nor needst thou by thy daughter to be told,
Though now thy sprightly blood with age be cold,
Thou hast been young, and canst remember still,
That when thou hadst the pow'r, thou hadst the will;

And from the past experience of thy fires,
 Canst tell with what a tide our strong desires
 Come rushing on in youth, and what their rage re-
 quires.

And grant thy youth was exercis'd in arms,
 When love no leisure found for softer charms;
 My tender age in luxury was train'd,
 With idle ease and pageants entertain'd;
 My hours my own, my pleasures unrestrain'd.
 So bred, no wonder if I took the bent
 That seem'd ev'n warranted by thy consent;
 For, when the father is too fondly kind,
 Such seed he sows, such harvest shall he find.
 Blame then thyself, as reason's law requires,
 (Since nature gave, and thou foment'st my fires;)
 If still those appetites continue strong,
 Thou may'st consider I am yet but young:
 Consider too, that having been a wife,
 I must have tasted of a better life;
 And am not to be blam'd, if I renew,
 By lawful means, the joys which then I knew.
 Where was the crime, if pleasure I procur'd,
 Young, and a woman, and to bliss inur'd?
 That was my case, and this is my defence;
 I pleas'd myself, I shunn'd incontinence,
 And, urg'd by strong desires, indulg'd my sense.

Left to myself, I must avow, I strove
 From public shame to screen my secret love;
 And, well-acquainted with thy native pride,
 Endeavour'd, what I could not help, to hide;
 For which a woman's wit an easy way supply'd.

How this, so well contriv'd, so closely laid,
Was known to thee, or by what chance betray'd,
Is not my care; to please thy pride alone,
I could have wish'd it had been still unknown.

Nor took I Guiscard by blind fancy led,
Or hasty choice, as many women wed;
But with deliberatè care and ripen'd thought,
At leisure first design'd, before I wrought;
On him I rested, after long debate,
And not without considering, fix'd my fate:
His flame was equal, though by mine inspir'd;
(For so the difference of our birth requir'd:)
Had he been born like me, like me his love
Had first begun, what mine was forc'd to move:
But thus beginning, thus we persevere;
Our passions yet continue what they were,
Nor length of trial makes our joys the less sincere.
At this my choice, though not by thine allow'd,
(Thy judgment herding with the common crowd)
Thou tak'st unjust offence; and, led by them,
Dost less the merit, than the man esteem.
Too sharply, Tancred, by thy pride betray'd,
Hast thou against the laws of kind inveigh'd;
For all th' offence is in opinion plac'd,
Which deems high birth by lowly choice debas'd:
This thought alone with fury fires thy breast,
(For holy marriage justifies the rest)
That I have sunk the glories of the state,
And mix'd my blood with a plebeian mate:
In which I wonder thou shouldst oversee
Superior causes, or impute to me
The fault of Fortune, or the Fates decree.

Or call it Heav'n's imperial pow'r alone,
Which moves on springs of justice, though unknown;
Yet this we see, though order'd for the best,
The bad exalted, and the good oppress'd;
Permitted laurels grace the lawless brow,
Th' unworthy rais'd, the worthy cast below.

But leaving that; search we the secret springs,
And backward trace the principles of things;
There shall we find, that when the world began,
One common mass compos'd the mould of man;
One paste of flesh on all degrees bestow'd,
And kneaded up alike with moist'ning blood.
The same Almighty Pow'r inspir'd the frame
With kindl'd life, and form'd their souls the same;
The faculties of intellect, and will,
Dispens'd with equal hand, dispos'd with equal skill,
Like liberty indulg'd with choice of good or ill. }
Thus born alike, from virtue first began
The diff'rence that distinguish'd man from man:
He claim'd no title from descent of blood,
But that which made him noble made him good:
Warm'd with more particles of heav'nly flame, }
He wing'd his upward flight, and soar'd to fame;
The rest remain'd below, a tribe without a name.

This law, though custom now diverts the course,
As Nature's institute, is yet in force;
Uncancell'd, though diffus'd; and he whose mind
Is virtuous, is alone of noble kind.

Though poor in fortune, of celestial race;
And he commits the crime who calls him base.

Now lay the line; and measure all thy court,
By inward virtue, not external port,

And find whom justly to prefer above
The man on whom my judgment plac'd my love :
So shalt thou see his parts and person shine ;
And thus compar'd, the rest a base degen'rate line.
Nor took I, when I first survey'd thy court,
His valour or his virtues on report ;
But trusted what I ought to trust alone,
Relying on thy eyes, and not my own ;
Thy praise (and thine was then the public voice)
First recommended Guiscard to my choice :
Directed thus by thee, I look'd, and found
A man, I thought, deserving to be crown'd ;
First by my father pointed to my sight,
Nor less conspicuous by his native light ;
His mind, his mein, the features of his face,
Excelling all the rest of human race. [right,
These were thy thoughts, and thou could'st judge a-
Till int'rest made a jaundice in thy sight.

Or shou'd I grant thou didst not rightly see ;
Then thou wert first deceiv'd, and I deceiv'd by thee.
But if thou shalt alledge, through pride of mind,
Thy blood with one of base condition join'd,
'Tis false; for 'tis not baseness to be poor ;
His poverty augments thy crime the more ;
Upbraids thy justice with the scant regard
Of worth : Whom princes praise they shou'd reward.
Are these the kings intrusted by the crowd
With wealth, to be dispens'd for common good ?
The people sweat not for their king's delight,
T' enrich a pimp, or raise a parasite ;
Theirs is the toil ; and he who well has serv'd
His country, has his country's wealth deserv'd.

Ev'n mighty monarchs oft are meanly born,
And kings by birth, to lowest rank return ;
All subject to the pow'r of giddy Chance ;
For Fortune can depress, or can advance :
But true nobility, is of the mind,
Not giv'n by Chance, and not to Chance resign'd.

For the remaining doubt of thy decree,
What to resolve, and how dispose of me,
Be warn'd to cast that uselefs care aside,
Myself alone will for myself provide.
If in thy doating and decrepit age,
Thy soul, a stranger in thy youth to rage,
Begins in cruel deeds to take delight,
Gorge with my blood thy barb'rous appetite ;
For I so little am dispos'd to pray
For life, I would not cast a wish away.
Such as it is, th' offence is all my own ;
And what to Guiscard is already done,
Or to be done, is doom'd by thy decree,
That, if not executed first by thee,
Shall on my person be perform'd by me.

Away, with women weep, and leave me here,
Fix'd, like a man to die, without a tear ;
Or save, or slay us both this present hour ;
'Tis all that Fate has left within thy pow'r.

She said : Nor did her father fail to find,
In all she spoke, the greatness of her mind ;
Yet thought she was not obstinate to die,
Nor deem'd the death she promis'd was so nigh :
Secure in this belief, he left the dame,
Resolv'd to spare her life, and save her shame ;

But that detested object to remove,
To wreck his vengeance, and to cure her love,
Intent on this, a secret order sign'd,
The death of Guiscard to his guards enjoin'd;
Strangling was chosen, and the night the time;
A mute revenge, and blind as was the crime:
His faithful heart, a bloody sacrifice,
Torn from his breast, to glut the tyrant's eyes,
Clos'd the severe command; for (slaves to pay)
What kings decree the soldier must obey:
Wag'd against foes, and, when the wars are o'er,
Fit only to maintain despotic pow'r;
Dang'rous to freedom, and desir'd alone
By kings who seek an arbitrary throne.
Such were these guards; as ready to have slain
The prince himself, allur'd with greater gain,
So was the charge perform'd with better will,
By men inur'd to blood, and exercis'd in ill.

Now, though the sullen fire had eas'd his mind,
The pomp of his revenge was yet behind,
A pomp prepar'd to grace the present he design'd.
A goblet rich with gems, and rough with gold,
Of depth and breadth the precious pledge to hold,
With cruel care he chose; the hollow part
Inclos'd; the lid conceal'd the lover's heart:
Then of his trusted mischiefs one he sent,
And bade him with these words the gift present:
Thy father sends thee this, to cheer thy breast,
And glad thy sight with what thou lov'st the best:
As thou hast pleas'd his eyes and joy'd his mind
With what he lov'd the most of human kind.

E'er this the royal dame, who well had weigh'd
The consequence of what her fire had said,
Fix'd on her fate, against th' expected hour,
Procur'd the means to have it in her pow'r :
For this, she had distill'd, with early care,
The juice of simples, friendly to despair,
A magazine of death ; and thus prepar'd,
Secure to die, the fatal message heard :
Then smil'd severe; nor with a troubl'd look,
Or trembling hand, the fun'ral present took ;
Ev'n kept her count'nance, when the lid remov'd,
Disclos'd the heart, unfortunately lov'd :
She needed not be told within whose breast
It lodg'd ; the message had explain'd the rest.
Or not amaz'd, or hiding her surprise,
She sternly on the bearer fix'd her eyes :
Then thus : Tell Tancred, on his daughter's part,
The gold, though precious, equals not the heart :
But he did well to give his best ; and I,
Who wish'd a worthier urn, forgive his poverty.

At this, she curb'd a groan, that else had come,
And pausing, view'd the present in the tomb :
Then, to the heart ador'd, devoutly glew'd
Her lips, and raising it, her speech renew'd ;
Ev'n from my day of birth, to this, the bound
Of my unhappy being, I have found
My father's care, and tenderness express'd :
But this last act of love excels the rest :
For this so dear a present, bear him back
The best return that I can live to make.

The messenger dispatch'd, again she view'd
The lov'd remains, and sighing, thus pursu'd.

Source of my life, and lord of my desires,
 In whom I liv'd, with whom my soul expires !
 Poor heart ! no more the spring of vital heat,
 Curs'd be the hands that tore thee from thy seat !
 The course is finish'd, which thy Fates decreed,
 And thou, from thy corporeal prison freed :
 Soon hast thou reach'd the goal with mended pace,
 A world of woes dispatch'd in little space :
 Forc'd by thy worth, thy foe in death become
 Thy friend, has lodg'd thee in a costly tomb ;
 There yet remain'd thy fun'ral exequies,
 The weeping tribute of thy widow's eyes,
 And those, indulgent heav'n has found the way
 That I, before my death, have leave to pay.
 My father ev'n in cruelty is kind,
 Or heav'n has turn'd the malice of his mind.
 To better uses than his hate design'd ;
 And made th' insult which in his gift appears,
 The means to mourn thee with my pious tears ;
 Which I will pay thee down, before I go,
 And save myself the pains to weep below,
 If souls can weep ; though once I meant to meet
 My fate with face unmov'd, and eyes unwet ;
 Yet since I have thee here in narrow room,
 My tears shall set thee first afloat within thy tomb :
 Then (as I know thy spirit hovers nigh)
 Under thy friendly conduct will I fly
 To regions unexplor'd, secure to share
 Thy state ; nor hell shall punishment appear ;
 And Heav'n is double Heav'n, if thou art there.
 She said : Her brimful eyes, that ready stood,
 And only wanted will to weep a flood,

Releas'd their watry store, and pour'd amain,
Like clouds low hung, a sober show'r of rain;
Mute solemn sorrow, free from female noise,
Such as the majesty of grief destroys:

For, bending o'er the cup, the tears she shed
Seem'd by the posture to discharge her head,
O'er-fill'd before; and oft (her mouth apply'd
To the cold heart) she kiss'd at once, and cry'd.
Her maids, who stood amaz'd, nor knew the cause
Of her complaining, nor whose heart it was;
Yet all due measures of her mourning kept,
Did office at the dirge, and by infection wept;
And oft enquir'd th' occasion of her grief,
(Unanswer'd but by sighs), and offer'd vain relief.
At length, her stock of tears already shed,
She wip'd her eyes, she rais'd her drooping head,
And thus pursu'd: O ever faithful heart,
I have perform'd the ceremonial part,
The decencies of grief; it rests behind,
That as our bodies were, our souls be join'd:
To thy whate'er abode my shade convey,
And as an elder ghost, direct the way.
She said; and bad the vial to be brought,
Where she before had brew'd the deadly draught,
First pouring out the med'cinable bane,
The heart, her tears had rins'd, she bath'd again;
Then down her throat the death securely throws,
And quaffs a long oblivion of her woes.

This done, she mounts the genial bed, and there,
(Her body first compos'd with honest care,)
Attends the welcome rest; her hands yet hold
Close to her heart, the monumental gold;

Nor farther word she spoke, but clos'd her sight,
And quiet, fought the covert of the night.

The damsels, who the while in silence mourn'd,
Not knowing, nor suspecting death suborn'd;
Yet, as their duty was, to Tancred sent,
Who, conscious of th' occasion, fear'd th' event.
Alarm'd, and with presaging heart he came,
And drew the curtains, and expos'd the dame
To loathsome light; then with a late relief
Made vain efforts to mitigate her grief.
She, what she could, excluding day, her eyes
Kept firmly seal'd, and sternly thus replies:

Tancred, restrain thy tears, unsought by me,
And sorrow, unavailing now to thee:
Did ever man before afflict his mind,
To see th' effects of what himself design'd?
Yet if thou hast remaining in thy heart
Some sense of love, some unextinguish'd part
Of former kindness, largely once profess'd,
Let me by that adjure thy harden'd breast,
Not to deny thy daughter's last request:
The secret love which I so long enjoy'd,
And still conceal'd, to gratify thy pride,
Thou hast disjoin'd; but, with my dying breath,
Seek not, I beg thee, to disjoin our death.
Where-e'er his corps by thy command is laid,
Thither let mine in public be convey'd;
Expos'd in open view, and side by side,
Acknowledg'd as a bridegroom and a bride.

The prince's anguish hinder'd his reply;
And she, who felt her fate approaching nigh,

Seiz'd the cold heart, and heaving to her breast,
Here, precious pledge, she said, securely rest.
These accents were her last; the creeping death
Benumb'd her senses first, then stopp'd her breath.

Thus she for disobedience justly dy'd;
The fire was justly punish'd for his pride.
The youth, least guilty, suffer'd for th' offence
Of duty violated to his prince;
Who late repenting of his cruel deed,
One common sepulcher for both decreed;
Intomb'd the wretched pair in royal state,
And on their monument inscrib'd their fate.

B A U C I S

A N D

P H I L E M O N.

Out of the EIGHTH BOOK of OVID's
METAMORPHOSES.

The author, pursuing the deeds of Theseus, relates how he, with his friend Perithous, were invited by Achelous, the River-God; to stay with him, till his waters were abated. Achelous entertains them with a relation of his own love to Perimele, who was changed into an island by Neptune, at his request. Perithous, being an atheist, derides the legend, and denies the power of the gods to work that miracle. Lelex, another companion of Theseus, to confirm the story of Achelous, relates another metamorphosis of Baucis and Philemon into trees; of which he was partly an eye-witness.

THUS Achelous ends : His audience hear,
With admiration, and admiring, fear
The pow'rs of heav'n ; except Ixion's son,
Who laugh'd at all the gods, believ'd in none :

He shook his impious head, and thus replies,
 These legends are no more than pious lies :
 You attribute too much to heavenly sway,
 To think they give us forms, and take away.

The rest of better minds, their sense declar'd
 Against this doctrine, and with horror heard.
 Then Lelex rose, an old experienc'd man,
 And thus with sober gravity began :
 Heav'n's pow'r is infinite ; earth, air, and sea,
 The manufacture mass, the making pow'r obey :
 By proof to clear your doubt ; in Phrygian ground
 Two neighb'ring trees, with walls encompass'd round,
 Stand on a mod'rate rise, with wonder shown,
 One a hard oak, a softer linden one :
 I saw the place and them, by Pitheus sent
 To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's government.
 Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
 Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant ;
 Here Jove with Hermes came ; but in disguise
 Of mortal men conceal'd their deities ;
 One laid aside his thunder, one his rod ;
 And many toilsome steps together trod :
 For harbour at a thousand doors they knock'd,
 Not one of all the thousand but was lock'd.
 At last an hospitable house they found,
 A homely shade, the roof not far from ground,
 Was thatch'd with reeds, and straw together bound. }
 There Baucis and Philemon liv'd, and there
 Had liv'd long marry'd, and a happy pair :
 Now old in love, though little was their store,
 Inur'd to want, their poverty they bore, }
 Nor aim'd at wealth, professing to be poor.

For master or for servant here to call,
Was all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obey'd.

From lofty roofs, the gods repuls'd before,
Now stooping, enter'd through the little door:
The man (their hearty welcome first express'd)
A common settle drew for either guest,
Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
But e'er they sat, officious Baucis lays
Two cushions stuff'd with straw, the seat to raise;
Coarse, but the best she had; then rakes the load
Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
The living coals; and, lest they shou'd expire,
With leaves and barks she feeds her infant-fire;
It smoaks; and then with trembling breath she blows,
Till in a chearful blaze the flames arose.
With brush-wood and with chips she strengthens these,
And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus form'd, she sets the kettle on,
(Like burnish'd gold the little seether shone);
Next took the colworts which her husband got
From his own ground, (a small well watter'd spot);
She stripp'd the stalks of all their leaves; the best
She cull'd, and then with handy-care she dress'd.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon seiz'd it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down;
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which for their sakes alone he wish'd were more.

This in the pot he plung'd without delay,
 To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
 The time between, before the fire they sat,
 And shorten'd the delay by pleasing chat.

A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
 Hung by the handle on a driven nail :
 This fill'd with water, gently warm'd, they set
 Before their guests; in this they bath'd their feet,
 And after with clean towels dry'd their sweat. }
 This done, the host produc'd the genial bed,
 Sallow the feet, the borders, and the sted, }
 Which with no costly coverlet they spread ;
 But coarse old garments ; yet such robes as these
 They laid alone at feasts and holidays.
 The good old hufwife tucking up her gown,
 The table sets ; th' invited gods lie down.
 The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
 A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
 Who thrusts beneath the limping leg a sherd,
 So was the mended board exactly rear'd :
 Then rubb'd it o'er with newly-gather'd mint,
 A wholesom herb, that breath'd a grateful scent.
 Pallas began the feast, where first was seen
 The party-colour'd olive, black, and green :
 Autumnal cornels next in order serv'd,
 In lees of wine well pickl'd and preserv'd :
 A garden-sallad was the third supply,
 Of endive, radishes, and succory :
 Then curds and cream, the flow'r of country-fare,
 And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care }
 Turn'd by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.

All these in earthen ware were serv'd to board;
And next in place an earthen pitcher, stor'd
With liquor of the best the cottage cou'd afford.
This was the table's ornament, and pride,
With figures wrought: Like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
Varnish'd with wax without, and lin'd within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepar'd,
And to the table sent the smoaking lard;
On which with eager appetite they dine,
A sav'ry bit, that serv'd to relish wine:
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately press'd.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plums, apples, nuts, and of their wintry store,
Dry figs, and grapes, and wrinkl'd dates were set
In cannisters, t'enlarge the little treat:
All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
Which in the midst the country-banquet crown'd:
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face:
In all they did, you might discern with ease
A willing mind, and a desire to please.

Mean time the beechen bowls went round, and still
Though often empty'd, were observ'd to fill;
Fill'd without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danc'd about the board.
Devotion seiz'd the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increas'd;
And up they held their hands, and fell to pray'r,
Excusing as they cou'd their country-fair.

One goose they had, ('twas all they cou'd allow)
A wakeful cent'ry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow :
Her with malicious zeal the couple view'd ;
She ran for life, and limping they pursu'd :
Full well the fowl perceiv'd their bad intent,
And wou'd not make her master's compliment;
But persecuted, to the pow'rs she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies:
He with a gracious ear the suppliant heard,
And sav'd her life; then what he was declar'd,
And own'd the god. The neighbourhood, said he,
Shall justly perish for impiety :
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way :
Leave these accurs'd; and to the mountain's height
Ascend; nor once look backward in your flight.

They haste, and what their tardy feet deny'd,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supply'd.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes;
Lost in a lake the floated level lies;
A watery desert covers all the plains,
Their cote alone, as in an isle, remains :
Wond'ring with weeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours fate, and country now no more ;
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increas'd, in height and bulk
to grow.

A stately temple shoots within the skies,
The crotchets of their cot in columns rise :
The pavement polish'd marble they behold, [gold.
The gates with sculpture grac'd, the spires and tiles of
Then thus the fire of Gods, with look serene :

Speak thy desire, thou only just of men ;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound.

A while they whisper ; then to Jove address'd,
Philemon thus prefers their joint request.

We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
And offer at your altars rites divine :
And since not any action of our life
Has been polluted with domestic strife,
We beg one hour of death ; that neither she
With widows tears may live to bury me,
Nor weeping I, with wither'd arms may bear
My breathless Baucis to the sepulcher.

The godheads sign their suit. They run their race
In the same tenor all th' appointed space :
Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
These past adventures at the temple-gate,
Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
Sprouting with sudden leaves of sprightly green :
Old Baucis look'd where old Philemon stood,
And saw his lengthen'd arms a sprouting wood :
New roots their fasten'd feet begin to bind,
Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind :
Then e'er the bark above their shoulders grew,
They give and take at once their last adieu :
At once, farewell, O faithful spouse, they said ;
At once th' incroaching riads their closing lips invade.

Ev'n yet, an ancient Tyanaean shows
A spreading oak, that near a linden grows;
The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
I saw myself the garlands on their boughs,
And tables hung for gifts of granted vows;
And off'ring fresher up, with pious pray'r,
The good, said I, are God's peculiar care, [share.
And such as honour heav'n, shall heav'nly honour }

P Y G M A L I O N

AND THE

S T A T U E.

Out of the TENTH BOOK of OVID's
METAMORPHOSES.

The Propætidæ, for their impudent behaviour, being turned into stone by Venus, Pygmalion, Prince of Cyprus, detested all women for their sake, and resolved never to marry: He falls in love with a statue of his own making, which is changed into a maid, whom he marries. One of his descendants is Cinyras, the father of Myrrha; the daughter incestuously loves her own father; for which she is changed into the tree which bears her name. These two stories immediately follow each other, and are admirably well connected.

P Y G M A L I O N loathing their lascivious life,
Abhorr'd all womankind, but most a wife:
So single chose to live, and shunn'd to wed,
Well pleas'd to want a consort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercis'd his happy skill;

And carv'd in iv'ry such a maid, so fair,
As Nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work; but in her own defence
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleas'd with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and last, the thing ador'd desires.
A very virgin in her face was seen,
And, had she mov'd, a living maid had been :
One wou'd have thought she cou'd have stirr'd; but strove
With modesty, and was asham'd to move.
Art, hid with art, so well perform'd the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit :
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore;
And still the more he knows it, loves the more :
The flesh, or what so seems, he touches oft,
Which feels so smooth, that he believes it soft.
Fir'd with this thought, at once he strain'd the breast,
And on the lips a burning kiss impress'd.
'Tis true, the harden'd breast resists the gripe,
And the cold lips return a kiss unripe :
But when, retiring back, he look'd again,
To think it iv'ry, was a thought too mean :
So wou'd believe she kiss'd, and courting more,
Again embrac'd her naked body o'er ;
And straining hard the statue, was afraid
His hands had made a dint, and hurt his maid :
Explor'd her, limb by limb, and fear'd to find
So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind.
With flatt'ry now, he seeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts (the pow'rful bribes of love :)
He furnishes her closet first; and fills
The crowded shelves with rarities of shells;

Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
 And all the sparkling stones of various hue :
 And parrots, imitating human tongue,
 And singing-birds in silver cages hung ;
 And ev'ry fragrant flow'r, and od'rous green,
 Were sorted well, with lumps of amber laid between :
 Rich, fashionable robes her person deck,
 Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck :
 Her taper'd fingers too with rings are grac'd,
 And an embroider'd zone surrounds her slender waste.
 Thus like a queen array'd, so richly dress'd,
 Beauteous she shew'd, but naked shew'd the best.
 Then, from the floor, he rais'd a royal bed,
 With cov'rings of Sydonian purple spread :
 The solemn rites perform'd, he calls her bride,
 With blandishments invites her to his side,
 And as she were with vital sense possess'd,
 Her head did on a plummy pillow rest.

The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
 To which the Cypriots due devotion pay ;
 With gilded horns, the milk-white heifers led,
 Slaughter'd before the sacred altars, bled :
 Pygmalion off'ring, first, approach'd the shrine,
 And then with pray'rs implor'd the pow'rs divine.
 Almighty gods, if all we mortals want,
 If all we can require, be yours to grant ;
 Make this fair statue mine, he wou'd have said,
 But chang'd his words, for shame ; and only pray'd, }
 Give me the likeness of my iv'ry maid.

The golden goddess, present at the pray'r,
 Well knew he meant th' inanimated fair,

And gave the sign of granting his desire;
For thrice in chearful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his mistress, hies,
And impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breast, by the dear statue lies.
He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks, and thinks they redden at the kiss;
He thought them warm before; nor longer stays,
But next his hand on her hard bosom lays.
Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It seem'd, the breast beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print,
'Twas flesh, but flesh so firm, it rose against the dint:
The pleasing task he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more soft at ev'ry touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chafing hands reduce
The former mass to form, and frame for use.
He would believe, but yet is still in pain,
And tries his argument of sense again,
Presses the pulse, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinc'd, o'erjoy'd, his studied thanks and praise
To her who made the miracle he pays.
Then lips to lips he join'd; now freed from fear,
He found the favour of the kiss sincere.
At this the waken'd image op'd her eyes,
And view'd at once the light and lover with surprize.
The goddess present at the match she made,
So bless'd the bed, such fruitfulness convey'd,
That e'er ten moons had sharpen'd either horn,
To crown their bliss, a lovely boy was born;
Paphos his name, who grown to manhood, wall'd
The city Paphos, from the founder call'd.

C I N Y R A S
A N D
M Y R R H A.

Out of the Tenth Book of OVID's
METAMORPHOSES.

*There needs no connection of this story with the former ;
for the beginning of this immediately follows the end
of the last : The reader is only to take notice, that Or-
pheus, who relates both, was by birth a Thracian ; and
his country far distant from Cyprus, where Myrrha
was born, and from Arabia, whither she fled. You will
see the reason of this note soon after the first lines of
this fable.*

NOR him alone produc'd the fruitful queen ;
But Cinyras, who like his fire had been
A happy prince, had he not been a fire.
Daughters and fathers from my song retire ;
I sing of horror ; and could I prevail,
You shou'd not hear, or not believe my tale.
Yet if the pleasure of my song be such,
That you will hear, and credit me too much,

Attentive listen to the last event,
And with the sin believe the punishment:
Since Nature cou'd behold so dire a crime,
I gratulate at least my native clime,
That such a land, which such a monster bore,
So far is distant from our Thracian shore.
Let Araby extol her happy coast,
Her cinnamon and sweet amomum boast,
Her fragrant flow'rs, her trees with precious tears,
Her second harvests, and her double years; [bears? }
How can the land be call'd so bless'd that Myrrha
Nor all her od'rous tears can cleanse her crime,
Her plant alone deforms the happy clime.
Cupid denies to have inflam'd thy heart,
Disowns thy love, and vindicates his dart:
Some fury gave thee those infernal pains,
And shot her venom'd vipers in thy veins.
'To hate thy fire had merited a curse;
But such an impious love deserv'd a worse.
The neighb'ring monarchs, by thy beauty led,
Contend in crowds, ambitious of thy bed:
'The world is at thy choice; except but one,
Except but him thou canst not chuse alone.
She knew it too, the miserable maid,
E'er impious love her better thoughts betray'd, }
And thus within her secret soul she said:
Ah Myrrha! whether wou'd thy wishes tend?
Ye gods, ye sacred laws, my soul defend
From such a crime, as all mankind detest,
And never lodg'd before in human breast!
But is it sin? or makes my mind alone
Th' imagin'd sin? for Nature makes it none.

What tyrant then these envious laws began,
Made not for any other beast, but man!
The father-bull his daughter may bestride,
The horse may make his mother-mare a bride;
What piety forbids the lusty ram
Or more salacious goat, to rut their dam?
The hen is free to wed the chick she bore,
And make a husband whom she hatch'd before.
All creatures else are of a happier kind,
Whom nor ill-natur'd laws from pleasure bind,
Nor thoughts of sin disturb their peace of mind.
But man, a slave of his own making lives;
The fool denies himself what Nature gives :
Too-busy senates, with an over care
To make us better than our kind can bear,
Have dash'd a spice of envy in the laws,
And straining up too high, have spoil'd the cause.
Yet some wise nations break their cruel chains,
And own no laws, but those which love ordains :
Where happy daughters with their fires are join'd,
And piety is doubly paid in kind.
O that I had been born in such a clime,
Not here, where 'tis the country makes the crime!
But whither wou'd my impious fancy stray?
Hence hopes, and ye forbidden thoughts away!
His worth deserves to kindle my desires,
But with the love that daughters bear to fires.
Then had not Cinyras my father been,
What hinder'd Myrrha's hopes to be his queen?
But the perverseness of my fate is such,
That he's not mine, because he's mine too much :

Our kindred blood debars a better tie ;
 He might be nearer, were he not so nigh.
 Eyes and their objects never must unite,
 Some distance is requir'd to help the sight :
 Fain wou'd I travel to some foreign shore,
 Never to see my native country more ;
 So might I to myself myself restore ;
 So might my mind these impious thoughts remove,
 And ceasing to behold, might cease to love.
 But stay I must, to feed my famish'd sight,
 To talk, to kiss ; and more, if more I might.
 More, impious maid ! what more canst thou design,
 To make a monstrous mixture in thy line,
 And break all statutes human and divine ?
 Canst thou be call'd (to save thy wretched life)
 Thy mother's rival, and thy father's wife ?
 Confound so many sacred names in one,
 Thy brother's mother, sister to thy son !
 And fear'st thou not to see th' infernal bands,
 Their heads with snakes, with torches arm'd their hands,
 Full at thy face, th' avenging brands to bear,
 And shake the serpents from their hissing hair ?
 But thou in time th' increasing ill controul,
 Nor first debauch the body by the soul ;
 Secure the sacred quiet of thy mind,
 And keep the sanctions Nature has design'd.
 Suppose I shou'd attempt, th' attempt were vain ;
 No thoughts like mine his sinless soul profane :
 Observant of the right ; and O, that he
 Cou'd cure my madness, or be mad like me !
 Thus she : But Cinyras, who daily sees
 A crowd of noble suitors at his knees,

Among so many, knew not whom to chuse,
Irresolute to grant, or to refuse.
But having told their names, enquir'd of her,
Who pleas'd her best, and whom she would prefer?
The blushing maid stood silent with surprize,
And on her father fix'd her ardent eyes,
And looking sigh'd, and as she sigh'd, began
Round tears to shed, that scalded as they ran.
The tender fire, who saw her blush and cry,
Ascrib'd it all to maiden modesty,
And dry'd the falling drops ; and yet more kind,
He stroak'd her cheeks, and holy kisses join'd.
She felt a secret venom fire her blood,
And found more pleasure than a daughter shou'd ;
And ask'd again, what lover of the crew
She lik'd the best, she answer'd, One like you.
Mistaking what she meant, her pious will
He prais'd, and bade her so continue still :
The word of pious heard, she blush'd with shame
Of secret guilt, and cou'd not bear the name.

'Twas now the mid of night, when slumbers close
Our eyes, and sooth our cares with soft repose ;
But no repose cou'd wretched Myrrha find,
Her body rolling as she roll'd her mind :
Mad with desire, she ruminates her sin,
And wishes all her wishes o'er again :
Now she despaire, and now resolves to try ;
Wou'd not, and wou'd again, she knows not why ;
Stops, and returns, makes and retracts the vow ;
Fain wou'd begin, but understands not how.
As when a pine is hew'd upon the plains,
And the last mortal stroke alone remains,

Lab'ring in pangs of death, and threat'ning all,
This way and that she nods, consid'ring where to fall:
So Myrrha's mind, impell'd on either side,
Takes ev'ry bent, but cannot long abide:
Irresolute on which she shou'd rely,
At last unfix'd in all, is only fix'd to die;
On that sad thought she rests, resolv'd on death,
She rises, and prepares to choak her breath:
Then while about the beam her zone she ties,
Dear Cinyras, farewell, she softly cries;
For thee I die, and only wish to be
Not hated, when thou know'st I die for thee:
Pardon the crime, in pity to the cause:
'This said, about her neck the noose she draws.
The nurse, who lay without, her faithful guard,
'Though not the words, the murmurs overheard,
And sighs and hollow sounds; surpriz'd with fright,
She starts, and leaves her bed, and springs a light;
Unlocks the door, and ent'ring out of breath,
The dying saw, and instruments of death;
She shrieks, she cuts the zone, with trembling haste,
And in her arms her fainting charge embrac'd:
Next, (for she now had leisure for her tears)
She weeping ask'd, in these her blooming years,
What unforeseen misfortune caus'd her care,
To loath her life, and languish in despair!
The maid, with downcast eyes, and mute with grief
For death unfinish'd, and ill-rim'd relief,
Stood fullen to her suit; the beldame press'd
The more to know, and bar'd her wither'd breast;
Adjur'd her by the kindly food she drew
From those dry founts, her secret ill to shew.

Sad Myrrha sigh'd, and turn'd her eyes aside;
 The nurse still urg'd, and wou'd not be deny'd:
 Nor only promis'd secrecy; but pray'd
 She might have leave to give her offer'd aid.
 Good-will, she said, my want of strength supplies,
 And diligence shall give what age denies:
 If strong desires thy mind to fury move,
 With charms and med'eines I can cure thy love:
 If envious eyes their hurtful rays have cast,
 More pow'rful verse shall free thee from the blast:
 If Heav'n offended sends thee this disease,
 Offended Heav'n with pray'rs we can appease.
 What then remains, that can these cares procure?
 Thy house is flourishing, thy fortune sure;
 Thy careful mother yet in health survives,
 And, to thy comfort, thy kind father lives.
 The virgin started at her father's name,
 And sigh'd profoundly, conscious of the shame.
 Nor yet the nurse her impious love divin'd;
 But yet surmis'd that love disturb'd her mind.
 Thus thinking, she pursu'd her point, and laid
 And lull'd within her lap the mourning maid;
 Then softly sooth'd her thus, I guess your grief;
 You love, my child; your love shall find relief.
 My long-experienc'd age shall be your guide;
 Rely on that, and lay distrust aside:
 No breath of air shall on the secret blow,
 Nor shall (what most you fear) your father know.
 Struck once again, as with a thunder clap,
 The guilty virgin bounded from her lap,
 And threw her body prostrate on the bed,
 And, to conceal her blushes, hid her head;

There silent lay, and warn'd her with her hand
'To go; but she receiv'd not the command;
Remaining still importunate to know.
Then Myrrha thus: Or ask no more, or go:
I prithee go, or staying, spare my shame;
What thou wou'dst hear, is impious even to name.
At this on high the beldame holds her hands,
And trembling, both with age and terror, stands;
Adjures, and falling at her feet intreats,
Sooths her with blandishments, and frights with threats,
To tell the crime intended, or disclose
What part of it she knew, if she no farther knows.
And last; if conscious to her counsel made,
Confirms anew the promise of her aid.
Now Myrrha rais'd her head; but soon oppress'd
With shame reclin'd it on her nurse's breast;
Bath'd it with tears, and strove to have confess'd. }
'Twice she began, and stopp'd; again she try'd;
The fault'ring tongue its office still deny'd.
At last her veil before her face she spread,
And drew a long preluding sigh, and said, }
O happy mother in thy marriage-bed!
Then groan'd, and ceas'd; the good old woman shook;
Stiff were here eyes, and ghastly was her look;
Her hoary hair upright with horror stood,
Made (to her grief) more knowing than she wou'd:
Much she reproach'd, and many things she said,
To cure the madness of th' unhappy maid:
In vain; for Myrrha stood convict of ill;
Her reason vanquish'd, but unchang'd her will:
Perverse of mind, unable to reply;
She stood resolv'd or to possess, or die.

At length the fondness of a nurse prevail'd
Against her better sense, and virtue fail'd :
Enjoy, my child, since such is thy desire,
Thy love, she said; she durst not say, thy fire;
Live, though unhappy; live on any terms :
Then with a second oath her faith confirms.

The solemn feast of Ceres now was near,
When long white linen stoles the matrons wear;
Rank'd in procession walk the pious train,
Off'ring first-fruits and spikes of yellow grain;
For nine long nights the nuptial bed they shun,
And, sanctifying harvest, lie alone.

Mix'd with the crowd, the queen forsook her lord,
And Ceres' pow'r with secret rites ador'd :
The royal couch now vacant for a time,
The crafty crone, officious in her crime,
The curs'd occasion took; the king she found
Easy with wine, and deep in pleasures drown'd,
Prepar'd for love; the beldame blew the flame,
Confess'd the passion, but conceal'd the name.
Her form she prais'd; the monarch ask'd her years,
And she reply'd, the same thy Myrrha bears.
Wine and commended beauty fir'd his thought;
Impatient, he commands her to be brought.
Pleas'd with her charge perform'd, she hies her home,
And gratulates the nymph the task was overcome.
Myrrha was joy'd the welcome news to hear;
But clogg'd with guilt, the joy was insincere :
So various, so discordant is the mind,
That in our will a diff'rent we find.
Ill she presag'd, and yet pursu'd her lust;
For guilty pleasures give a double gust.

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 'To go; but she receiv'd not the command;
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So various, so discordant is the mind,
That in our will a diff'rent we find.
Ill she presag'd, and yet pursu'd her lust;
For guilty pleasures give a double gust.

'Twas depth of night; Arctophylax had driv'n
 His lazy wain half round the northern heav'n;
 When Myrrha hasten'd to the crime desir'd,
 The moon beheld her first, and first retir'd;
 The stars amaz'd, ran backward from the sight,
 And (shrunk within their sockets) lost their light.
 Icarius first withdraws his holy flame;
 The Virgin Sign, in heav'n the second name,
 Slides down the belt, and from her station flies,
 And night with sable clouds involves the skies.
 Bold Myrrha still pursues her black intent;
 She stumbl'd thrice, (an omen of th' event;) }
 Thrice shriek'd the fun'ral owl, yet on she went,
 Secure of shame, because secure of sight;
 Ev'n bashful sins are impudent by night.
 Link'd hand in hand, th' accomplice and the dame,
 Their way exploring, to the chamber came;
 The door was ope, they blindly grope their way,
 Where dark in bed th' expecting monarch lay:
 Thus far her courage held, but here forsakes;
 Her faint knees knock at ev'ry step she makes.
 The nearer to her crime, the more within
 She feels remorse and horror of her sin;
 Repents too late her criminal desire,
 And wishes that unknown she cou'd retire.
 Her ling'ring thus, the nurse (who fear'd delay
 The fatal secret might at length betray)
 Pull'd forward, to complete the work begun,
 And said to Cinyras, Receive thy own:
 Thus saying, she deliver'd kind to kind,
 Accurs'd, and their devoted bodies join'd.

The fire, unknowing of the crime, admits
His bowels, and profanes the hallow'd sheets;
He found she trembl'd, but believ'd she strove
With maiden-moesty against her love, [move. }
And fought with flatt'ring words vain fancies to re-
Perhaps he said, My daughter, cease thy fears,
(Because the title suited with her years;)
And Father, she might whisper him again,
That names might not be wanting to the sin.
Full of her fire, she left th' incestuous bed,
And carry'd in her womb the crime she bred.
Another and another night she came;
For frequent sin had left no sense of shame:
Till Cinyras desir'd to see her face,
Whose body he had held in close embrace,
And brought a taper; the revealer, light,
Expos'd both crime and criminal to sight.
Grief, rage, amazement, cou'd no speech afford,
But from the sheath he drew th' avenging sword;
The guilty fled; the benefit of night,
That favour'd first the sin, secur'd the flight.
Long wand'ring through the spacious fields, she bent
Her voyage to th' Arabian continent;
Then pass'd the region which Panchaea join'd,
And flying left the palmy plains behind.
Nine times the moon had mew'd her horns; at length
With travel weary, unsupply'd with strength,
And with the burden of her womb oppress'd,
Sabaean fields afford her needful rest;
There, loathing life, and yet of death afraid,
In anguish of her spirit thus she pray'd.

Ye pow'rs, if any so propitious are,
T' accept my penitence, and hear my pray'r;
Your judgments, I confess, are justly sent;
Great sins deserve as great a punishment:
Yet since my life the living will profane,
And since my death the happy dead will stain,
A middle state your mercy may bestow,
Betwixt the realms above and those below;
Some other form to wretched Myrrha give,
Nor let her wholly die, nor wholly live.
The pray'rs of penitents are never vain;
At least she did her last request obtain:
For while she spoke, the ground began to rise,
And gather'd round her feet, her legs, and thighs;
Her toes in roots descend, and spreading wide,
A firm foundation for the trunk provide;
Her solid bones convert to solid wood,
To pith her marrow, and to sap her blood;
Her arms are boughs, her fingers change their kind,
Her tender skin is harden'd into rind.
And now the rising tree her womb invests,
Now, shooting upwards still, invades her breasts,
And shades the neck; when, weary with delay,
She sunk her head within, and met it half the way.
And though with outward shape she lost her sense,
With bitter tears she wept her last offence;
And still she weeps, nor sheds her tears in vain;
For still the precious drops her name retain.
Mean time the misbegotten infant grows,
And, ripe for birth, distends with deadly throws
The swelling rind, with unavailing strife,
To leave the wooden-womb, and pushes into life.

The mother-tree, as if oppress'd with pain,
Writhes here and there, to break the bark in vain ;
And, like a lab'ring woman, wou'd have pray'd,
But wants a voice to call Lucina's aid :
The bending bole sends out a hollow sound,
And trickling tears fall thicker on the ground :
The mild Lucina came uncall'd, and stood [wood :
Beside the struggling boughs, and heard the groaning
Then reach'd her midwife-hand, to speed the throws,
And spoke the pow'rful spells that babes to birth disclose.
The bark divides, the living load to free,
And safe delivers the convulsive tree.
The ready nymphs receive the crying child,
And wash him in the tears the parent-plant distill'd.
They swath'd him with their scarfs; beneath him spread
The ground with herbs; with roses rais'd his head.
The lovely babe was born with ev'ry grace,
Ev'n envy must have prais'd so fair a face :
Such was his form, as painters when they show
Their utmost art, on naked loves bestow :
And that their arms no diff'rence might betray,
Give him a bow, or his from Cupid take away.
Time glides along with undiscover'd haste,
The future but a length behind the past ;
So swift are years; the babe whom just before
His grandfire got, and whom his sister bore ;
The drop, the thing which late the tree inclos'd,
And late the yawning bark to life expos'd ;
A babe, a boy, a beauteous youth appears,
And lovelier than himself at riper years.
Now to the Queen of Love he gave desires,
And, with her pains, reveng'd his mother's fires.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
HOMER's
ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Chrysis, priest of Apollo, brings presents to the Grecian princes, to ransom his daughter Chryseis, who was prisoner in the fleet. Agamemnon, the General, whose captive and mistress the young lady was, refuses to deliver her; threatens the venerable old man, and dismisses him with contumely. The priest craves vengeance of his god; who sends a plague among the Greeks: Which occasions Achilles, their great champion, to summon a council of the chief officers. He encourages Calchas, the high priest and prophet, to tell the reason why the gods were so much incens'd against them: Calchas is fearfull of provoking Agamemnon, till Achilles engages to protect him: Then, embolden'd by the hero, he accuses the General as the cause of all, by detaining the fair captive, and refusing the presents offer'd for her ransom. By this proceeding, Agamemnon is oblig'd, against his will, to restore Chryseis, with gifts, that he might appease the wrath of Phoebus; but, at the same time, to

revenge himself on Achilles, sends to seize his slave Briseis. Achilles, thus affronted, complains to his mother Thetis; and begs her to revenge his injury, not only on the General, but on all the army, by giving victory to the Trojans, till the ungrateful king became sensible of his injustice. At the same time, he retires from the camp into his ships, and withdraws his aid from his countrymen. Thetis prefers her son's petition to Jupiter, who grants her suit. Juno suspects her errand, and quarrels with her husband, for his grant; till Vulcan reconciles his parents with a bowl of nectar, and sends them peaceably to bed.

THE wrath of Peleus' son, O Muse, resound;
 Whose dire effects the Grecian army found:
 And many a heroe, king, and hardy knight,
 Were sent, in early youth, to shades of night;
 Their limbs a prey to dogs and vultures made;
 So was the sov'reign will of Jove obey'd:
 From that ill omen'd hour when strife begun
 Betwixt Atrides great, and Thetis god-like son,
 What pow'r provok'd, and for what cause, relate,
 Sow'd, in their breasts, the seeds of stern debate.
 Jove's and Latona's son his wrath express'd,
 In vengeance of his violated priest,
 Against the king of men; who swoln with pride,
 Refus'd his presents, and his pray'rs deny'd.
 For this the god a swift contagion spread
 Amid the camp; where heaps on heaps lay dead.
 For venerable Chrysis came to buy,
 With gold and gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.

Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood;
Awful, and arm'd with ensigns of his god:
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand [mand.
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his sceptre of com-
His suit was common; but above the rest,
To both the brother-princes thus address'd.

Ye sons of Atreus, and ye Grecian pow'rs,
So may the gods who dwell in heav'nly bow'rs
Succeed your siege, accord the vows you make,
And give you Troy's imperial town to take;
So, by their happy conduct, may you come
With conquest back to your sweet native home;
As you receive the ransom which I bring,
(Respecting Jove, and the far-shooting king,)
And break my daughter's bonds, at my desire;
And glad with her return her grieving sire.

With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks decree
To take the gifts, to set the damsel free.
The king of men alone with fury burn'd;
And haughty, these opprobrious words return'd:
Hence, holy dotard, and avoid my sight,
E'er evil intercept thy tardy flight;
Nor dare to tread this interdicted strand,
Lest not that idle sceptre in thy hand,
Nor thy god's crown, my vow'd revenge withstand. }
Hence, on thy life; the captive-maid is mine;
Whom not for price or pray'rs I will resign.
Mine she shall be, till creeping age and time
Her bloom have wither'd, and consum'd her prime.
Till then my royal bed she shall attend;
And having first adorn'd it, late ascend.

This, for the night; by day, the web and loom,
And homely household-task, shall be her doom;
Far from thy lov'd embrace, and her sweet native
home.

He said: The helpless priest reply'd no more,
But sped his steps along the hoarse-resounding shore:
Silent he fled; secure at length he stood,
Devoutly curs'd his foes, and thus invoc'd his god.

O source of sacred light, attend my pray'r,
God with the silver bow, and golden hair!
Whom Chrysa, Cilla, Tenedos obeys,
And whose broad eye their happy soil surveys:
If, Smintheus, I have pour'd before thy shrine
The blood of oxen, goats, and ruddy wine,
And larded thighs on loaded altars laid,
Hear, and my just revenge propitious aid.

Pierce the proud Greeks, and with thy shafts attest
How much thy pow'r is injur'd in thy priest.

He pray'd, and Phoebus hearing, urg'd his flight,
With fury kindled, from Olympus height;
His quiver o'er his ample shoulders threw;
His bow twang'd, and his arrows rattl'd as they flew.
Black as a stormy night, he rang'd around
The tents, and compass'd the devoted ground.
Then with full force his deadly bow he bent,
And feather'd fates among the mules and sumpters sent
Th' essay of rage on faithful dogs the next;
And last, in human hearts his arrows fix'd.
The god nine days the Greeks at rovers kill'd,
Nine days the camp with fun'ral fires was fill'd;
The tenth, Achilles, by the queen's command,
Who bears heav'n's awful sceptre in her hand,

A council summon'd : For the goddess griev'd
Her favour'd host shou'd perish unreliev'd.

The kings, assembl'd, soon their chief inclose;

Then from his seat the goddess-born arose,

And thus undaunted spoke : What now remains,

But that once more we tempt the watry plains,

And wandering homeward, seek our safety hence,

In flight at least if we can find defence ?

Such woes at once encompass us about,

The plague within the camp, the sword without.

Consult, O king, the prophets of th' event :

And whence these ills, and what the gods intent,

Let them by dreams explore; for dreams from Jove
are sent.

What want of offer'd victims, what offence

In fact committed cou'd the Sun incense,

To deal his deadly shafts ? what may remove

His settled hate, and reconcile his love ?

That he may look propitious on our toils ;

And hungry graves no more be glutted with our spoils.

Thus to the king of men the hero spoke;

Then Calchas the desir'd occasion took :

Calchas the sacred seer, who had in view [knew.

Things present and the past ; and things to come fore-

Supreme of augurs, who, by Phoebus taught,

The Greeian pow'rs to Troy's destruction brought.

Skill'd in the secret causes of their woes,

The reverend priest in graceful act arose :

And thus bespoke Pelides : Care of Jove,

Favour'd of all th' immortal pow'rs above ;

Wou'dst thou the seeds deep sown of mischief know,

And why provok'd Apollo bends his bow ?

Plight first thy faith, inviolably true,
To save me from those ills that may ensue.

For I shall tell ungrateful truths, to those
Whose boundless pow'r of life and death dispose.
And sov'reigns ever jealous of their state,
Forgive not those whom once they mark for hate;
Ev'n tho' th' offence they seemingly digest,
Revenge, like embers, rak'd within their breast,
Bursts forth in flames; whose unresisted pow'r
Will seize th' unwary wretch, and soon devour.
Such, and no less is he, on whom depends [fends.
The sum of things; and whom my tongue of force of-
Secure me then from his foreseen intent, [vent.
That what his wrath may doom, thy valour may pre-

To this the stern Achilles made reply:
Be bold; and on my plighted faith rely,
To speak what Phoebus has inspir'd thy soul
For common good; and speak without controul.
His godhead I invoke, by him I swear,
That while my nostrils draw this vital air,
None shall presume to violate those bands;
Or touch thy person with unhallow'd hands;
Ev'n not the king of men that all commands.

At this, resum'g heart, the prophet said;
Nor hecatombs unslain, nor vows unpaid,
On Greeks, accurs'd, this dire contagion bring;
Or call for vengeance from the bowyer king;
But he the tyrant, whom none dares resist,
Affronts the godhead in his injur'd priest;
He keeps the damsel captive in his chain,
And presents are refus'd, and pray'rs preferr'd in vain.

For this th' avenging pow'r employs his darts;
And empties all his quivers in our hearts.
Thus will persist, relentless in his ire,
Till the fair slave be render'd to her fire:
And ransom-free restor'd to his abode,
With sacrifice to reconcile the god.
Then he, perhaps, atton'd by pray'r, may cease
His vengeance justly vow'd, and give the peace.

Thus having said, he sate: Thus answer'd then
Upstarting from his throne, the king of men,
His breast with fury fill'd his eyes with fire;
Which rowling round, he shot in sparkles on the fire.
Angur of ill, whose tongue was never found
Without a priestly curse or boding sound;
For not one blest'd event foretold to me
Pass'd through that mouth, or pass'd unwillingly.
And now thou dost with lies the throne invade,
By practice harden'd in thy stand'ring trade.
Obtending heav'n, for whate'er ills befall;
And sputtring under specious names thy gall.
Now Phoebus is provok'd; his rites and laws
Are in his priest profan'd, and I the cause.
Since I detain a slave, my sov'reign prize;
And sacred gold, your idol-god, despise.
I love her well; and well her merits claim,
To stand preferr'd before my Grecian dame.
Not Clytemnestra's self, in beauty's bloom,
More charm'd, or better ply'd the various loom.
Mine is the maid; and brought in happy hour
With ev'ry shoushold-grace adorn'd, to blest my nup-
tial bow'r.

Yet shall she be restor'd; since public good
For private int'rest ought not be withstood,
To save th' effusion of my people's blood.
But right requires, if I resign my own,
I shou'd not suffer for your sakes alone;
Alone excluded from the prize I gain'd,
And by your common suffrage have obtain'd.
The slave without a ransom shall be sent:
It rests for you to make th' equivalent.

To this the fierce Thessalian prince reply'd:
O first in pow'r, but passing all in pride!
Gripping, and still tenacious of thy hold,
Wouldst thou the Grecian chiefs, though largely soul'd,
Shou'd give the prizes they had gain'd before;
And with their loss thy sacrilege restore?
Whate'er by force of arms the soldier got,
Is each his own, by dividend of lot:
Which to resume were both unjust and base;
Not to be borne, but by a servile race.
But this we can: If Saturn's son bestows
The sack of Troy, which he by promise owes;
Then shall the conquering Greeks thy loss restore,
And with large int'rest, make th' advantage more.

To this Atrides answer'd, Though thy boast
Assumes the foremost name of all our host,
Pretend not, mighty man, that what is mine
Controll'd by thee, I tamely shou'd resign.
Shall I release the prize I gain'd by right,
In taken towns, and many a bloody fight,
While thou detain'st Briseis in thy bands,
But priestly glossing on the god's commands?

Resolve on this, (a short alternative)
 Quit mine, or, in exchange, another give;
 Else I, assure thy soul, by sov'reign right
 Will seize the captive in thy own despight;
 Or from stout Ajax, or Ulysses, bear
 What other prize my fancy shall prefer:
 Then softly murmur, or aloud complain,
 Rage as you please, you shall resist in vain.
 But more of this, in proper time and place,
 To things of greater moment let us pass.
 A ship to sail the sacred seas prepare;
 Proud in her trim; and put on board the fair,
 With sacrifice and gifts, and all the pomp of pray'r. }
 The crew well chosen, the command shall be }
 In Ajax; or, if other I decree, }
 In Creta's king, or Ithacus; or, if I please, in thee: }
 Most fit thyself to see perform'd th' intent }
 For which my pris'ner from my sight is sent; }
 ('Thanks to thy pious care) that Phoebus may relent. }

At this, Achilles roul'd his furious eyes,
 Fix'd on the king askant; and thus replies.
 O, impudent, regardful of thy own,
 Whose thoughts are center'd on thyself alone!
 Advanc'd to sovereign sway, for better ends
 Than thus like abject slaves to treat thy friends.
 What Greek is he, that urg'd by thy command,
 Against the Trojan troops will lift his hand?
 Not I: Nor such inforc'd respect I owe;
 Nor Pergamus I hate, nor Priam is my foe.
 What wrong from Troy remote, cou'd I sustain,
 To leave my fruitful soil, and happy reign,
 And plough the furges of the stormy main? }

Thee, frontless man, we follow'd from afar;
 Thy instruments of death, and tools of war.
 Thine is the triumph; ours the toil alone : [throne.
 We bear thee on our backs, and mount thee on the
 For thee we fall in fight; for thee redress
 Thy baffled brother; not the wrongs of Greece.
 And now thou threaten'st with unjust decree,
 To punish thy affronting heav'n on me.
 To seize the prize which I so dearly bought;
 By common suff'rage giv'n, confirm'd by lot.
 Mean match to thine: For still above the rest,
 Thy hook'd rapacious hands usurp the best.
 Though mine are first in fight, to force the prey,
 And last sustain the labours of the day.
 Nor grudge I thee the much the Grecians give;
 Nor murmur take the little I receive.
 Yet ev'n this little, thou, who wou'dst ingross
 The whole, insatiate, envy'st as thy loss.
 Know, then, for Phthya, fix'd is my return :
 Better at home my ill-paid pains to mourn,
 Than from an equal here sustain the public scorn. }
 The king, whose brows with shining gold were
 bound, [round,
 Who saw his throne with scepter'd slaves incompas'd
 Thus answer'd stern: Go! at thy pleasure, go!
 We need not such a friend, nor fear we such a foe.
 There will not want to follow me in fight:
 Jove will assist, and Jove assert my right.
 But thou of all the kings (his care below)
 Art least at my command, and most my foe.
 Debates, dissensions, uproars are thy joy;
 Provok'd without offence, and practis'd to destroy.

Strength is of brutes, and not thy boast alone;
 At least 'tis lent from heav'n, and not thy own.
 Fly then, ill manner'd, to thy native land,
 And there, thy ant-born Myrmidons command.
 But mark this menace; since I must resign
 My black-eyed maid, to please the pow'r's divine;
 (A well-rigg'd vessel in the port attends,
 Mann'd at my charge, commanded by my friends;) The R.
 The ship shall waft her to her wish'd abode,
 Full fraught with holy bribes to the far shooting-god. The R.
 This thus dispatch'd, I owe myself the care,
 My fame and injur'd honour to repair;
 From thy own tent, proud man, in thy despight,
 This hand shall ravish thy pretended right:
 Briseis shall be mine, and thou shalt see,
 What odds of awful pow'r I have on thee; [gree. }
 That others at thy cost may learn the diff'rence of de-

At this th' impatient hero sourly smil'd;
 His heart impetuous in his bosom boil'd,
 And jostled by two tides of equal sway,
 Stood, for a while, suspended in his way;
 Betwixt his reason, and his rage untam'd;
 One whisper'd soft, and one aloud reclaim'd.
 That only counsell'd to the safer side;
 This to the sword, his ready hand apply'd.
 Unpunish'd to support th' affront was hard;
 Nor easy was th' attempt to force the guard.
 But soon the thirst of vengeance fir'd his blood;
 Half shone his faulchion, and half sheath'd it stood.

In that nice moment, Pallas, from above,
 Commission'd by th' imperial wife of Jove,

Descended swift: (The white arm'd queen was loth
 The fight should follow; for she favour'd both:)
 Just as in act he stood, in clouds inshrin'd,
 Her hand she fasten'd on his hair behind;
 Then backward by his yellow curls she drew:
 To him, and him alone confess'd in view.
 Tame by superior force, he turn'd his eyes,
 Aghast at first, and stupid with surprize;
 But by her sparkling eyes, and ardent look,
 The virgin-warrior known, he thus bespoke.

Com'st thou, Celestial, to behold my wrongs?
 Then view the vengeance which to crimes belongs.

Thus he. The blue ey'd goddess thus rejoind;
 I come to calm thy turbulence of mind.
 If reason will resume her sov'reign sway;
 And sent by Juno, her commands obey.
 Equal she loves you both, and I protect.
 Then give thy guardian gods their due respect;
 And cease contention; be thy words severe,
 Sharp as he merits; but the sword forbear.
 An hour unhop'd already wings her way,
 When he his dire affront shall dearly pay.
 When the proud king shall sue, with trebble gain,
 To quit thy loss and conquer thy disdain.
 But thou secure of my unfailing word,
 Compose thy swelling soul, and sheath the sword.

The youth thus answer'd mild: Auspicious maid,
 Heav'n's will be mine, and your commands obey'd.
 The gods are just; and when, subduing sense,
 We serve their pow'rs, provide the recompence.
 He said; with surly faith believ'd her word,
 And, in the sheath, reluctant, plung'd the sword.

Her message done, she mounts the blest abodes,
And mix'd among the senate of the gods.

At her departure his disdain return'd:
The fire she fann'd, with greater fury burn'd;
Rumbling within till thus it found a vent:
Dastard, and drunkard, mean and insolent!
Tongue-valiant here, vaunter of thy might,
In threats the foremost, but the lag in fight!
When did thou thrust amid the mingl'd press,
Content to bid the war aloof in peace?
Arms are the trade of each plebeian soul;
'Tis death to fight; but kingly to controul.
Lord-like at ease, with arbitrary pow'r,
To peel the chiefs, the people to devour.
These, traitor, are thy talents; safer far
Than to contend in fields, and toils of war.
Nor could'st thou thus have dar'd the common hate,
Were not their souls as abject as their state.
But, by this sceptre, solemnly I swear, [bear,
(Which never more green leaf or growing branch shall
Torn from the tree, and giv'n by Jove to those
Who laws dispense and mighty wrongs oppose)
That when the Grecians want my wonted aid,
No gift shall bribe it, and no pray'r persuade.
When Hector comes, the homicide, to wield
His conquering arms, with corps to strow the field:
Then shalt thou mourn thy pride; and late confess
My wrong repented, when 'tis past redress.
He said; and with disdain in open view,
Against the ground his golden sceptre threw.
Then sat: With boiling rage Atrides burn'd,
And foam betwixt his gnashing grinders churn'd.

But from his seat the Pylian prince arose,
 With reas'ning mild, their madness to compose:
 Words, sweet as honey, from his mouth distill'd;
 Two centuries already he fulfill'd;
 And now began the third; unbroken yet;
 Once fam'd for courage; still in counsel great.

What worse, he said, can Argos undergo,
 What more can gratify the Phrygian foe,
 Than these distemper'd heats? if both the lights
 Of Greece their private int'rest disunites!
 Believe a friend, with thrice your years increas'd,
 And let these youthful passions be repress'd:
 I flourish'd long before your birth; and then
 Liv'd equal with a race of braver men,
 Than these dim eyes shall e'er behold again. }
 Ceneus and Dryas, and, excelling them,
 Great Theseus, and the force of greater Polypheme.
 With these I went, a brother of the war,
 Their dangers to divide; their fame to share.
 Nor idle stood with unassisting hands,
 When savage beasts, and mens savage bands,
 Their virtuous toil subdu'd: Yet those I sway'd
 With pow'rful speech; I spoke, and they obey'd.
 If such as those my counsels cou'd reclaim,
 'Think not, young warriors, your diminish'd name
 Shall lose of lustre, by subjecting rage
 To the cool dictates of experienc'd age.
 Thou, King of men, stretch not thy sovereign sway
 Beyond the bounds free subjects can obey;
 But let Pelides in his prize rejoice,
 Achiev'd in arms, allow'd by public voice.

Nor thou, brave champion, with his pow'r contend,
Before whose throne ev'n kings their lower'd sceptres
bend.

The head of action he, and thou the hand ;
Matchless thy force ; but mightier his command :
Thou first, O king, release the rights of sway,
P'ow'r, self-restrain'd, the people best obey.
Sanctions of law from thee derive their source ;
Command thyself, whom no commands can force.
The son of Thetis, rampier of our host,
Is worth our care to keep ; nor shall my pray'rs be lost.

Thus Nestor said, and ceas'd : Atrides broke
His silence next ; but ponder'd e'er he spoke.
Wise are thy words, and glad I would obey ;
But this proud man affects imperial sway.
Controlling kings, and trampling on our state,
His will is law ; and what he wills is fate.
The gods have giv'n him strength : But whence the stile
Of lawless pow'r assum'd, or licence to revile ?

Achilles cut him short, and thus reply'd :
My worth allow'd in words, is in effect deny'd :
For who but a poltroon, possess'd with fear,
Such haughty insolence can tamely bear ?
Command thy slaves ; my free-born soul disdains
A tyrant's curb, and restiff breaks the reins.
Take this along, that no dispute shall rise
(Though mine the woman) for the ravish'd prize ;
But she expected, as unworthy strife,
Dare not, I charge thee dare not, on thy life,
Touch ought of mine beside, by lot my due,
But stand aloof, and think profane to view ;

This faulchion, else, not hitherto withstood,
These hostile fields shall fatten with thy blood.

He said : And rose the first ; the council broke ;
And all their grave consults dissolv'd in smoke.

The royal youth retir'd, on vengeance bent,
Patroclus follow'd silent to his tent.

Mean time, the king with gifts a vessel stores ;
Supplies the banks with twenty chosen oars :
And next, to reconcile the shooter god,
Within her hollow sides the sacrifice he stow'd :

Chryseis last was set on board, whose hand
Ulysses took, intrusted with command ; [land. }
They plow the liquid seas, and leave the less'ning }

Atrides then, his outward zeal to boast,
Bade purify the sin-polluted host.
With perfect hecatombs the god they grac'd,
Whose offer'd intrails in the main were cast.
Black bulls and bearded goats on altars lie,
And clouds of sav'ry stench involve the sky.
These pomps the royal hypocrite design'd
For shew ; but harbour'd vengeance in his mind :
Till holy malice, longing for a vent,
At length discover'd his conceal'd intent.
Talthybius, and Eurybates the just
Heralds of arms, and ministers of trust,
He call'd, and thus bespoke : Haste hence your way,
And from the goddess-born demand his prey.
If yielded, bring the captive ; if deny'd,
The king (so tell him) shall chastise his pride ;
And with arm'd multitudes in person come,
To vindicate his pow'r, and justify his doom.

This hard command unwilling they obey,
And o'er the barren shore pursue their way, [lay.
Where quarter'd in their camp the fierce Thessalians
Their sov'reign seated on his chair they find,
His pensive cheek upon his hand reclin'd,
And anxious thoughts revolving in his mind.
With gloomy looks he saw them ent'ring in
Without salute; nor durst they first begin,
Fearful of rash offence and death foreseen.
He soon the cause divining, clear'd his brow;
And thus did liberty of speech allow.

Interpreters of gods and men, be bold;
Awful your character, and uncontroll'd;
Howe'er unpleasing be the news you bring,
I blame not you, but your imperious king.
You come, I know, my captive to demand;
Patroclus give her to the herald's hand.
But you, authentic witnesses, I bring,
Before the gods and your ungrateful king,
Of this my manifest; that never more
This hand shall combat on the crooked shore:
No, let the Grecian pow'rs, oppress'd in fight,
Unpity'd perish in their tyrant's sight.
Blind of the future, and by rage misled,
He pulls his crimes upon his people's head.
Forc'd from the field in trenches to contend,
And his insulted camp from foes defend.
He said; and soon obeying his intent,
Patroclus brought Briseis from her tent;
Then to th' intrusted messengers resign'd:
She wept, and often cast her eyes behind:

Forc'd from the man she lov'd; they led her thence,
Along the shore a pris'ner to their prince.

Sole on the barren sands the suff'ring chief
Roar'd out for anguish, and indulg'd his grief.
Cast on his kindred seas a stormy look,
And his upbraided mother thus bespoke.

Unhappy parent of a short-liv'd son,
Since Jove in pity by thy pray'rs was won
To grace my small remains of breath with fame,
Why loads he this imbitter'd life with shame?
Suff'ring his king of men to force my slave,
Whom well deserv'd in war the Grecians gave.

Set by old Ocean's side the goddess heard;
Then from the secret deep her head she rear'd:
Rose like a morning-mist, and thus begun
To sooth the sorrows of her plaintive son.
Why cries my care, and why conceals his smart,
Let thy afflicted parent share her part?

Then, sighing from the bottom of his breast,
To the sea-goddess thus the goddess-born address'd.
Thou know'st my pain, which telling but recalls:
By force of arms we raz'd the Theban walls;
The ranack'd city, taken by our toils,
We left, and hither brought the golden spoils:
Equal we shar'd them; but, before the rest,
The proud prerogative had seiz'd the best.
Chryseis was the greedy tyrant's prize,
Chryseis rosy-cheek'd, with charming eyes.
Her sire, Apollo's priest, arriv'd, to buy,
With proffer'd gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and arm'd with ensigns of his god:

Bare was his hoary head, one holy hand [command.
Held forth his laurel-crown, and one his sceptre of
His suit was common, but above the rest
To both the brother-princes was address'd.
With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks agree
To take the gifts, to set the pris'ner free.
Not so the tyrant, who with scorn the priest
Receiv'd, and with opprobrious words dismiss'd.
The good old man, forlorn of human aid,
For vengeance to his heav'nly patron pray'd:
The godhead gave a favourable ear,
And granted all to him he held so dear;
In an ill hour his piercing shafts he sped;
And heaps on heaps of slaughter'd Greeks lay dead.
While round the camp he rang'd; at length arose
A seer who well divin'd, and durst disclose
The source of all our ills: I took the word,
And urg'd the sacred slave to be restor'd.
The gods appeas'd; the swelling monarch storm'd;
And then the vengeance vow'd, he since perform'd.
The Greeks 'tis true, their ruin to prevent,
Have to the royal priest his daughter sent;
But from their haughty king his heralds came,
And seiz'd, by his command, my captive dame,
By common suffrage giv'n; but thou be won,
If in thy pow'r, t' avenge thy injur'd son:
Ascend the skies, and supplicating move
Thy just complaint to cloud-compelling Jove.
If thou by either word or deed hast wrought
A kind remembrance in his grateful thought,
Urge him by that; for often hast thou said
Thy pow'r was once not useless in his aid.

When he who high above the highest reigns,
 Surpriz'd by traitor-gods, was bound in chains ;
 When Juno, Pallas, with ambition fir'd,
 And his blue brother of the seas conspir'd,
 Thou freed'st the sov'reign from unworthy bands,
 Thou brought'st Briareus with his hundred hands,
 (So call'd in heav'n, but mortal men below
 By his terrestrial name, Ægeon know :
 Twice stronger than his fire, who sat above
 Assessor to the throne of thund'ring Jove.)
 The gods, dismay'd at his approach, withdrew,
 Nor durst their unaccomplish'd crime pursue.
 That action to his grateful mind recal ;
 Embrace his knees, and at his footstool fall ;
 That now if ever he will aid our foes ;
 Let Troy's triumphant troops the camp inclose :
 Ours, beaten to the shore, the siege forsake,
 And what their king deserves with him partake :
 That the proud tyrant at his proper cost,
 May learn the value of the man he lost.

To whom the mother-goddeſs thus reply'd,
 Sigh'd e'er ſhe ſpoke, and while ſhe ſpoke ſhe cry'd :
 Ah wretched me ! by fates averſe decreed.
 To bring thee forth with pain, with care to breed !
 Did envious heav'n not otherwiſe ordain,
 Safe in thy hollow ſhips thou ſhould'ſt remain ;
 Nor ever tempt the fatal field again.
 But now thy planet ſheds his poiſ'nous rays,
 And ſhort and full of ſorrow are thy days.
 For what remains, to heav'n I will aſcend,
 And at the thund'rer's throne thy ſuit commend.

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Till then, secure in ships, abstain from fight,
Indulge thy grief in tears, and vent thy spight.
For yesterday the court of heav'n with Jove
Remov'd; 'tis dead vacation now above.
Twelve days the gods their solemn revels keep,
And quaff with blameless Ethiops in the deep.
Return'd from thence, to heav'n my flight I take,
Knock at the brazen gates, and providence awake.
Embrace his knees, and suppliant to the fire,
Doubt not I will obtain the grant of thy desire.

She said: And parting left him on the place,
Sworn with disdain, resenting his disgrace:
Revengeful thoughts revolving in his mind,
He wept for anger, and for love he pin'd.

Mean time with prosperous gales Ulysses brought
The slave, and ship with sacrifices fraught,
To Chrysa's port; where, entering with the tide,
He drop'd his anchors, and his oars he ply'd.
Furl'd ev'ry sail, and drawing down the mast,
His vessel moor'd, and made with haulfers fast.
Descending on the plain, ashore they bring
The hecatomb, to please the shooter king.
The dame before an altar's holy fire
Ulysses led, and thus bespoke her fire.

Reverenc'd be thou, and be thy god ador'd:
The king of men thy daughter has restor'd;
And sent by me with presents and with pray'r;
He recommends him to thy pious care.
That Phoebus at thy suit his wrath may cease,
And give the penitent offenders peace.

He said, and gave her to her father's hands,
Who glad receiv'd her, free from servile bands.

This done, in order they with sober grace,
 Their gifts around the well-built altar place.
 Then wash'd and took the cakes; while Chryses stood
 With hands upheld, and thus invok'd his god.

God of the silver bow, whose eyes survey
 The sacred Cilla, thou whose awful sway
 Chrysa the bless'd, and Tenedos obey!
 Now hear, as thou before my pray'r hast heard,
 Against the Grecians, and their prince, prefer'd:
 Once thou hast honour'd, honour once again
 Thy priest, nor let his second vows be vain.
 But from th' afflicted host, and humbled prince,
 Avert thy wrath, and cease thy pestilence.
 Apollo heard, and conquering his disdain,
 Unbent his bow, and Greece respir'd again.

Now when the solemn rites of pray'r were past,
 Their salted cakes on crackling flames they cast.
 Then, turning back, the sacrifice they sped:
 The fatted oxen slew, and flea'd the dead.
 Chop'd off their nervous thighs, and next prepar'd
 T' involve the lean in cauls, and mend with lard.
 Sweat-breads and collops were with skewers prick'd
 About the sides, imbibing what they deck'd.
 The priest with holy hands was seen to tinge
 The cloven wood, and pour the-ruddy wine.
 The youth approach'd the fire, and as it burn'd
 On five sharp broachers rank'd, the roast they turn'd:
 These morsels stay'd their stomachs, then the rest
 They cut in legs and fillets for the feast;
 Which drawn and serv'd, their hunger they appease
 With sav'ry meat, and set their minds at ease.

Now when the rage of eating was repell'd,
The boys with gen'rous wine the goblets fill'd.
The first libations to the gods they pour:
And then with songs indulge the genial hour;
Holy debauch! till day to night they bring,
With hymns and paeans to the bowyer king.
At sun-set to their ships they make return,
And snore secure on decks, till rosy morn.

The skies with dawning day were purpl'd o'er,
Awak'd, with lab'ring oars they leave the shore:
'The pow'r appeas'd, with winds suffic'd the sail,
The belling canvas strutted with the gale;
'The waves indignant roar with surly pride,
And press against the sides, and beaten off divide.
They cut the foamy way, with force impell'd
Superior, till the Trojan port they held:
Then hauling on the strand their gally moor,
And pitch their tents along the crooked shore.

Meantime the goddess-born, in secret pin'd;
Nor visited the camp, nor in the council join'd,
But keeping close, his gnawing heart he fed
With hopes of vengeance on the tyrant's head:
And wish'd for bloody wars and mortal wounds,
And of the Greeks oppress'd in fight to hear the dying
sounds.

Now, when twelve days compleat had run their race,
The gods bethought them of the cares belonging to
their place.

Jove at their head ascending from the sea,
A shoal of puny pow'rs attend his way.
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her son,
Emerging from the deep, to beg her boon,

Pursu'd their track ; and waken'd from his rest,
Before the sovereign stood a morning guest.
Him in the circle, but apart, she found :
The rest at awful distance stood around.
She bow'd, and e'er she durst her suit begin,
One hand embrac'd his knees, one prop'd his chin.
Then thus : If I, celestial Sire, in aught
Have serv'd thy will, or gratify'd thy thought,
One glimpse of glory to my issue give ;
Grac'd for the little time he has to live.
Dishonour'd by the king of men he stands :
His rightful prize is ravish'd from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my son's defence,
Assume thy pow'r, assert thy providence.
Let Troy prevail, till Greece th' affront has paid,
With doubled honours ; and redeem'd his aid.

She ceas'd ; but the consid'ring god was mute ;
'Till she, resolv'd to win, renew'd her suit ;
Nor loos'd her hold, but forc'd him to reply :
Or grant me my petition, or deny.

Jove cannot fear : Then tell me to my face,
That I, of all the gods am least in grace.
'This can I bear, the cloud-compeller mourn'd,
And sighing, first, this answer he return'd.

Know'st thou what clamours will disturb my reign,
What my stunn'd ears from Juno must sustain ?
In council she gives licence to her tongue ;
Loquacious, brawling, ever in the wrong.
And now she will my partial pow'r upbraid,
If alienate from Greece, I give the Trojans aid.
But thou depart, and shun her jealous sight,
The care be mine to do Pelides right.

Go then, and on the faith of Jove rely;
When nodding to thy suit, he bows the sky.
This ratifies th' irrevocable doom:
The sign ordain'd, that what I will shall come:
The stamp of heav'n, and seal of fate. He said,
And shook the sacred honours of his head.
With terror trembled heav'n's subsiding hill:
And from his shaken curls ambrosial dews distill.
The goddess goes exulting from his sight, [light.
And seeks the seas profound; and leaves the realms of

He moves into his hall: The pow'rs resort,
Each from his house to fill the sov'reign's court.
Nor waiting summons, nor expecting stood;
But met with reverence, and receiv'd the God.
He mounts the throne; and Juno took her place:
But sullen discontent sat lowring on her face.
With jealous eyes, at distance she had seen,
Whisp'ring with Jove the silver-footed queen;
Then, impotent of tongue, (her silence broke)
Thus turbulent in rattling tone she spoke.

Author of ills, and close contriver Jove!
Which of thy dames, what prostitute of love,
Has held thy ear so long, and begg'd so hard,
For some old service done, some new reward?
Apart you talk'd, for that's your special care;
The consort never must the council share.
One gracious word is for a wife too much:
Such is a marriage-vow, and Jove's own faith is such.

Then thus the sire of gods, and men below,
What I have hidden, hope not thou to know.
Ev'n goddesses are women: And no wife
Has pow'r to regulate her husband's life.

Counsel she may ; and I will give thy ear
The knowledge first, of what is fit to hear.
What I transact with others, or alone,
Beware to learn ; nor press too near the throne.

To whom the goddess with the charming eyes,
What hast thou said, O tyrant of the skies !
When did I search the secrets of thy reign,
Though privileg'd to know, but privileg'd in vain ?
But well thou dost, to hide from common sight
Thy close intrigues, too bad to bear the light.
Nor doubt I, but the silver-footed dame,
Tripping from sea, on such an errand came,
To grace her issue, at the Grecians cost,
And for one peevish man destroy an host.

To whom the thund'rer made this stern reply ;
My household-curse, my lawful plague, the spy
Of Jove's designs, his other squinting eye ;
Why this vain prying, and for what avail ?
Jove will be master still and Juno fail.
Shou'd thy suspicious thoughts divine aright,
Thou but becom'st more odious to my sight,
For this attempt ; uneasy life to me
Still watch'd, and importun'd, but worse for thee.
Curb that impetuous tongue, before too late
The gods behold, and tremble at thy fate.
Pitying, but daring not in thy defence,
To lift a hand against omnipotence.

This heard, the imperious queen fate mute with fear ;
Nor further durst incense the gloomy thunderer.
Silence was in the court at this rebuke :
Nor cou'd the gods abash'd, sustain their sov'reign's look.

The limping smith, observ'd the sadden'd feast;
And hopping here and there, (himself a jest)
Put in his word, that neither might offend;
To Jove obsequious, yet his mother's friend.
What end in heav'n will be of civil war,
If gods of pleasure will for mortals jar?
Such discord but disturbs our jovial feast;
One grain of bad, embitters all the best.
Mother, tho' wise yourself, my counsel weigh;
'Tis much unsafe my sire to disobey.
Not only you provoke him to your cost,
But mirth is marr'd, and the good cheer is lost.
Tempt not his heavy hand; for he has pow'r
To throw you headlong, from his heav'nly tow'r.
But one submissive word, which you let fall,
Will make him in good humour with us all.

He said no more, but crown'd a bowl; unbid:
The laughing nectar overlook'd the lid:
Then put it to her hand; and thus pursu'd,
This curst quarrel be no more renew'd.
Be, as becomes a wife, obedient still;
Though griev'd, yet subject to her husband's will.
I wou'd not see you beaten; yet afraid
Of Jove's superior force, I dare not aid.
Too well I know him, since that hapless hour,
When I and all the gods employ'd our pow'r
To break your bonds: Me by the heel he drew;
And o'er heav'n's battlements with fury threw.
All day I fell; my flight at morn begun,
And ended not but with the setting sun.
Pitch'd on my head, at length the Lemnian-ground
Receiv'd my batter'd skull, the Sinthians heal'd my
wound.

At Vulcan's homely mirth his mother smil'd,
 And smiling took the cup the clown had fill'd.
 The reconciler bowl went round the board,
 Which empty'd, the rude skinker still restor'd.
 Loud fits of laughter seiz'd the guests, to see
 The limping god so dest at his new ministry.
 The feast continu'd till declining light: [night,
 They drank, they laugh'd, they lov'd, and then 'twas
 Nor wanted tuneful harp, nor vocal quire;
 The Muses sung; Apollo touch'd the lyre.
 Drunken at last, and drowsy, they depart,
 Each to his house; adorn'd with labour'd art
 Of the lame architect; the thund'ring god
 Ev'n he withdrew to rest, and had his load.
 His swimming head to needful sleep apply'd;
 And Juno lay unheeded by his side.

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The End of the Third Volume.

